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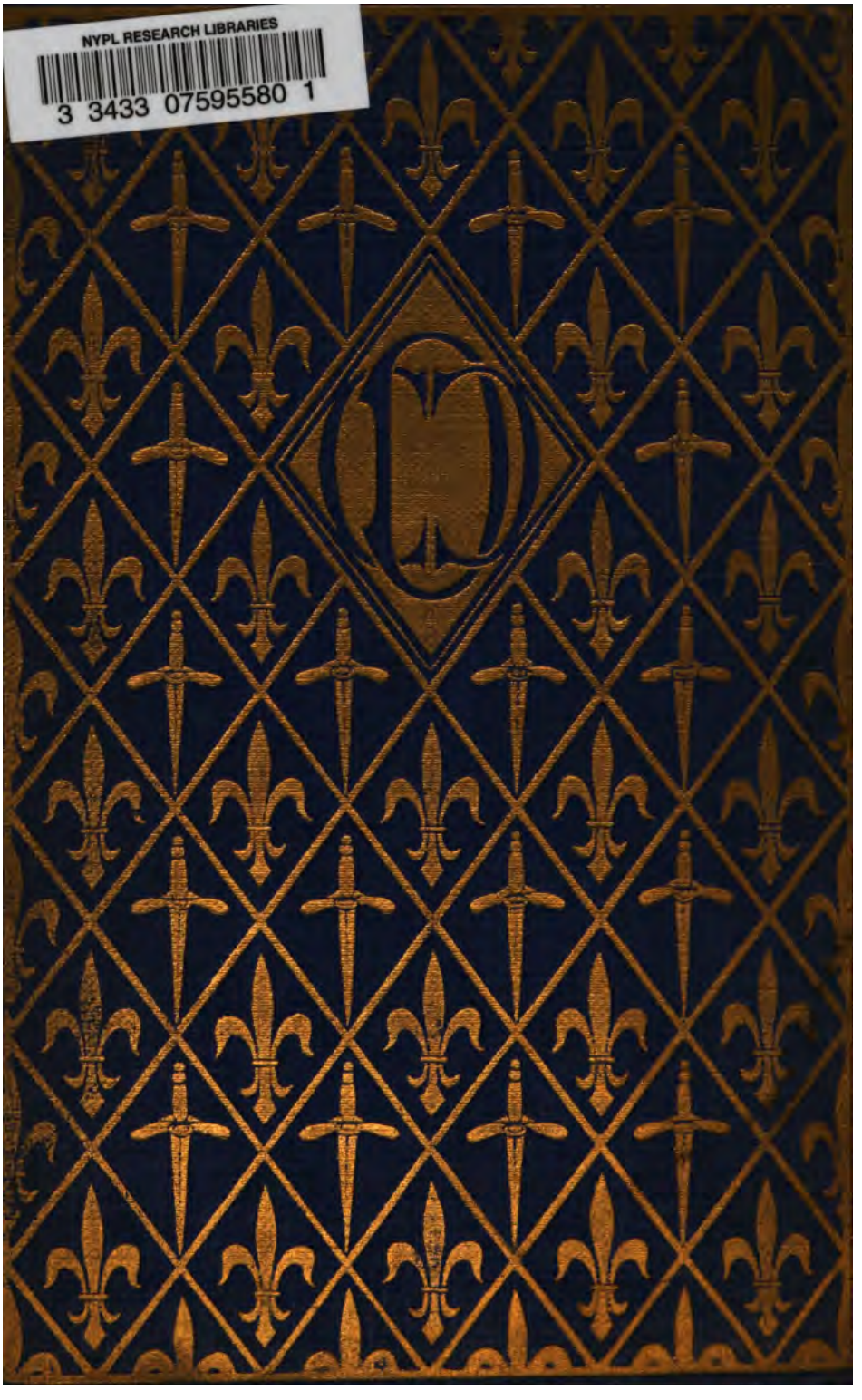

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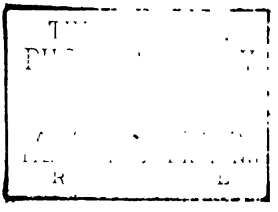

Ali-Pacha superintending the destruction of Janina.—ALI-PACHA.

ALEXANDRE DUMAS

CELEBRATED CRIMES

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ALI-PACHA

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CELEBRATED CRIMES

ALI-PACHA

The beginning of this century witnessed many bold undertakings, and extraordinary alternations of fortune. While the Western world was by turns resisting and bending the knee to a sub-lieutenant become emperor, who made kings and unmade kingdoms at will, the effete East, like mummies which are alive only in appearance, was gradually falling in pieces and being parceled out among the bold adventurers who assailed it on all sides. Beside the comparatively unimportant revolts, which led to naught but brief conflicts, and resulted in trifling changes only, like that of Djezzar Pacha, who refused to pay tribute because he deemed himself safe from attack in his citadel of St. John of Acre, or that of Passevend Oglou Pacha, who took his stand upon the walls of Widdin as the defender of the institution of janissaries against that of a regular militia as decreed by Sultan Selim at Stamboul,—beside these there were more extensive rebellions, which aimed their blows at the constitution of the empire and curtailed its extent, like those of Czerni-Georges, who raised Servia to a place among the free nations, of Mehemet Ali, who made a kingdom for himself out of his pachalik of Egypt, and lastly of the man whose story we propose to relate, Ali Tepalen, Pacha of Janina, whose long resistance preceded and brought about the regeneration of Greece.

This great movement was in no sense planned or carried out by him. He foresaw it, but never sought to help it forward, and there was no time when it would have been possible for him to check it. He was not one of those men who devote their whole lives to the service of a cause, and all that he did was done to acquire and augment a power of which he was at once the architect and the beneficiary. He never could see anything but himself in the whole universe, he loved none but himself, and worked for none but himself. He bore in his heart the seed of all the passions, and devoted his whole life to their development and gratification. His character is sufficiently described in that statement; and his actions were simply the natural consequences of his character trying conclusions with circumstances. Few men have been more thoroughly consistent, or better suited to the atmosphere in which they lived; and as a personality is the more striking, the more completely it sums up in itself the ideas and morals of the time and country in which its possessor lived, the figure of Ali-Pacha is certainly one of the most interesting if not of the most brilliant in contemporary history.

In the middle of the eighteenth century, Turkey was already suffering from the political gangrene, for which she is vainly seeking a cure to-day, and which will soon make an end of her before our eyes. Anarchy and disorder reigned from one end of the empire to the other. The race of the Osmanlis, built solely for conquest, was like to show itself good for nothing whenever the tide of conquest should turn against it. And that was what actually happened, when Sobieski, saving Christianity under the walls of Vienna, as Karl Martel saved it long before on the plains of Poitiers, set bounds

to the Mussulman flood, and for the last time bade it not exceed them. The haughty descendants of Ortogrul, who thought that they were born to command, fell back upon tyranny when they found themselves deserted by the genius of victory. In vain did common sense cry out to them that oppression could not long endure in hands that had lost their strength, and that peace imposed new burdens upon those who could no longer triumph in war; they would hear none of it; and, trusting themselves as blindly to the guidance of fatality when it condemned them to repose as when it drove them on to invasion, they lay back in superb indifference, resting with all their weight upon the uncomfortable couch of conquered peoples. Like ignorant husbandmen who exhaust fertile fields by forced cultivation, they speedily ruined their vast, wealthy empire by unbearable oppression. Inexorable conquerors, and insatiable masters, with one hand they lashed the vanquished and with the other despoiled the slaves. Nothing was so high as to be out of reach of their insolence, nothing could equal their avarice and greed. The victor was never sated, the vanquished had no respite. But in proportion as the exactions increased on the one side, the resources diminished on the other. Soon their oppressed victims began to realize that they must find some means of escape from these tyrants whom they could neither mollify nor satisfy. Each people chose the method best suited to its position and character; some resorted to inertia, others to violence. The natives of the lowlands, weak and unprotected, bent like reeds before the tempest, and tried to turn aside the blow they could not bear up against. The people of the highlands stood like rocks defying the torrent, and put forth their utmost strength to stem it. In both directions there was

resistance, different in kind, but similar in result. In the one locality, all work had ceased; in the other war had begun. The greed of the tyrants, fluctuating between the untilled plain and the armed mountain, was equally powerless against destitution and against rebellion, and tyranny's domain was reduced to a desert, shut in by a wall. However, it was necessary to furnish food for the magnificent Sultan, the successor of the Prophet, and the dispenser of crowns, and for that purpose the Sublime Porte needed money. Imitating, unsuspectingly, the Roman Senate, the Turkish divan put the empire up at auction. All places were sold to the highest bidder; pachas, beys, cadis, ministers of all ranks, and clerks of every description were forced to purchase their offices of the sovereign, and to make his subjects pay them. They put out money in the capital and reimbursed themselves in the provinces. As there was no other law than the master's good pleasure, they had no better guaranty than his caprice. Consequently they had to set quickly to work, or to risk losing the office before beginning to enjoy its emoluments. Thus the whole science of administration consisted in looting as much and as quickly as possible. To accomplish that result, the delegate of the imperial power himself delegated it on the same conditions to other agents who had to peculate for themselves and for him at the same time; so that there were but three classes of men in the whole empire, those who labored to steal a great deal, those who sought to retain a little, and those who took no part in anything, because they had nothing and hoped for nothing.

Albania was one of the most difficult provinces to deal with. The people were very poor, very determined, and furthermore naturally entrenched within rugged

mountain chains. The pachas had much difficulty in collecting money there, because every native was accustomed to defend his little property most energetically. Mohammedans or Christians, the Albanians were all soldiers. Being descended, some from the indomitable Scythians, others from the old Macedonians, once masters of the world, mingled with Norman adventurers brought thither by the great movement of the Crusades, the blood that ran in their veins was the true blood of warriors, and war seemed to be their element. Sometimes fighting among themselves, canton against canton, village against village, and often family against family—sometimes at daggers drawn with the governors of their sangiacs—sometimes in rebellion with the latter against the Sultan, their only periods of repose from fighting were armed truces. Each tribe had its military organization, each family its fortified manor-house, each individual his gun over his shoulder. When they had nothing better to do they tilled their own fields and mowed their neighbor's, whose crops they carried away, of course; or else they went to pasture with their flocks, watching for an opportunity to lay violent hands upon those at pasture near by. Such was the normal condition, the ordinary life of the people of Epirus, Thesprotia, Thessaly and Upper Albania. The dwellers in the low country, were less strong, and less bold and active as well; and there, as in many other parts of Turkey, the man from the plain frequently fell a victim to the man from the mountain. Among the mountains the memory of Scander-Beg was cherished, and there the customs of ancient Laconia had sought shelter; the exploits of the brave soldier were sung to the music of the lyre, and the clever robber was held up as an example to the children by their fathers. There were

the scene of feasts at which naught was served but booty taken from the stranger, and the *pièce de resistance* was invariably a stolen sheep. Every man was estimated by his address and personal courage, and was sure to have advantageous offers of marriage when he had earned the reputation of a shrewd and daring bandit.

The Albanians proudly styled this absence of order and direction, liberty, and watched with jealous care over the perpetuation of a state of things bequeathed by their ancestors, and which always assured the first place to the bravest man.

Amid these men was Ali Tepalen born, amid these customs was he reared. He boasted that he belonged to the race of conquerors, and was descended from an ancient family, the Anadouli, which came to Albania with the troops of Bajazet Ilderim. But it is fully established by the learned investigations of M. de Ponqueville, that he came of native stock, and was not, as he claimed, of Asiatic descent. His ancestors were Christian Skipetars who became Mohammedans after the Turkish invasion. His genealogy can be traced no farther back than the end of the sixteenth century.

Mouktar Tepalen, his grandsire, met his death in the Turkish expedition against Corfu, in 1716. Marshal Schulembourg, who defended the island, having repulsed the attacking force with heavy loss, captured Mouktar on Mount San Salvador, where he was stationed in charge of the signals, and with a barbarity worthy of his adversaries, ordered him hanged without even the pretense of a trial. It may be admitted that the memory of this murder was well calculated to prejudice Ali against Christians.

Mouktar left three sons, two of whom, Salik and Mehemet, were born of his wife, and the third of a

slave. The latter was the youngest and was named Veli; under the law he was as capable of inheriting from his father as the others. The family was one of the wealthiest in the town of Tepalen, of which it bore the name; it possessed an income of six thousand piastres, equivalent to twenty thousand francs. That was a great fortune in a poor country, where all the crops sold for a song. But the Tepalens, in the capacity of beys, found that they had, with the rank, the needs of the great land holders of feudal Europe. They were obliged to maintain a great establishment of retainers, men-at-arms, and horses, and consequently their expenses were large, and they soon found their income insufficient. There was one natural means of increasing it, namely to reduce the number of those among whom it was divided. The two older brothers, sons of the wife, combined against Veli, the son of the slave, and drove him out of his father's house. Being thus forced to become an exile, he accepted the situation like a brave youth, and determined to make others pay for his brothers' sins. He therefore began to infest the highways and by-ways, gun on shoulder and yataghan at his belt, lying in ambush, attacking, pillaging or holding to ransom all those who fell into his hands.

After some years passed at this praiseworthy occupation, he found himself possessed of great wealth, and leader of a band of well-seasoned cut-throats. Deeming the time ripe for vengeance he set out for Tepalen. He arrived there without warning, crossed the river Voyussa, the Aoüs of the ancients, and marched through the streets to his father's house without encountering any resistance. His brothers, warned in time, had barricaded the house. He at once laid siege to it, and after a very brief resistance forced the doors and pursued

his brothers to a little pagoda in which they took shelter. He surrounded the pagoda, and when he was certain that they were inside, ordered it set on fire at the four corners.

"You see," he said to his men, "that I cannot be accused of any desire to pay off old scores, for my brothers turned me out of my father's house, while I am making sure that they will always remain here."

In a few moments he was his father's sole heir, and master of Tepalen. Having thus gratified his utmost wish, he renounced his adventurous life, and took up his abode permanently in the town, of which he became the first *aga*. He already had one son by a slave woman, who speedily presented him with a second, and not long after with a daughter. He had, therefore, no lack of heirs, but as he was rich enough to support several wives and more children, he determined to add to his power and influence by contracting an alliance with some great family of the province. So he cast about for a suitable *parti*, and obtained the hand of Kamco, daughter of a bey of Conitza. This marriage connected him with the principal families of the province, and among others with that of Kourd Pacha, vizier of Berat, who was a descendant of the illustrious race of Scander-Beg. Before many years Veli had by his new wife a son named Ali, the subject of this sketch, and a daughter named Chaïnitza.

Notwithstanding his purpose to reform, Veli could not altogether lay aside his former customs. Although his fortune made small gains and losses of no consequence to him, he none the less amused himself now and then by stealing sheep, goats and the like, probably to keep his hand in. This playful exercise of his powers was not to the liking of his neighbors, and the

affrays and fighting began again in good earnest. Luck was not always on his side, and the former bandit lost in the town a portion of what he had won on the mountains. These annoyances soured his disposition and undermined his health. In defiance of Mahomet he sought consolation in wine, which soon finished him. He died in 1754.

Ali, who was then thirteen years old, was left free to follow the promptings of his impetuous nature. From infancy he had exhibited an extraordinary degree of petulant energy, differing much in that respect from other young Turks, who are naturally very reserved, and are taught to be impassive. As soon as he left the harem he began to pass his time among the mountains, wandering through the forests, leaping from precipice to precipice, rolling in the snow, defying the tempest, and exhaling his restless energy at every pore. It may have been by courting dangers of all sorts that he learned to defy them by overcoming them; it may have been this constant contact with the grandeurs of nature that awoke in him the craving for personal grandeur which nothing could allay. In vain did his father seek to curb his wild disposition, and check his wandering propensity; he could do nothing. As stubborn as he was disobedient, he defeated all his efforts, and all his precautions. If he was locked into his room, he broke down the door, or jumped out of the window; if they threatened him he pretended to yield, as if vanquished by fear, and made all the promises he was asked to make, only to break them all at the first opportunity. He had a tutor specially assigned to look after him, and watch his every movement. He continually eluded him by some fresh stratagem, and when he thought that he was sure of impunity, maltreated him

shamefully. It was not until after his father's death that he began to tame down to some extent; he even learned to read, to please his mother, whose idol he was, and to whom, in return, he had given all his affection.

Kamco's ardent love for Ali was quite natural, because not only did her blood flow in his veins, but her nature was reproduced in him. So long as her husband, whom she feared, was alive, she seemed to be only a woman like other women, but as soon as his eyes were closed she gave free rein to the fierce passions which were fermenting in her bosom. Ambitious, daring and vindictive, she labored assiduously to fertilize the seeds of ambition, audacity and vengeance which were already sprouting vigorously in the young Ali.

"My son," she was forever saying to him, "the man who doesn't defend his patrimony deserves to have it stolen from him. Remember that another man's property is his only so long as he is strong enough to keep it, and that, when you are strong enough to seize it, it will belong to you. Success legitimizes everything, and everything is permissible for him who has the power."

And so Ali, when he was at the climax of his grandeur, took pleasure in repeating that it was due to her that he had attained the position he occupied.

"I owe everything to my mother," he said one day to the French consul; "for my father when he died left me nothing but a dog-kennel and a few poor fields. My imagination, excited by her counsel, who twice gave me life, for she made me a man and a vizier, revealed the secret of my destiny to me. Thenceforth I saw in Tepalen simply the spot on which I happened to be born, and whence I was to pounce upon the prey I was already devouring in thought. I dreamed of naught but power, treasure, palaces, everything in short which

time has placed in my hands, and still promises me; for the point which I have reached is not the summit of my hopes."

Kamco did not confine herself to words; she employed all possible means to augment the fortune of her beloved son, and make him great and powerful. Her first act was to poison Veli's children by his favorite slave, who died before him. Her mind being thus at rest as to family matters, she turned all her attention to matters outside. Renouncing all customs of her sex, she laid aside the veil and distaff, and took up arms, upon the pretext of upholding the rights of her children. She assembled her husband's former partisans, some of whom she won over by gifts, others by prostituting herself to them; and gradually succeeded in enlisting in her cause all the licentious and enterprising men in Toscaria. With their support she made herself omnipotent at Tepalen, and pitilessly persecuted such of her enemies as were unfortunate enough to live there.

The inhabitants of two neighboring towns, Kormovo and Kardiki, dreading that this terrible woman, with the assistance of her son, who was now a man grown, would use her power to assail their independence, secretly formed a plot against her, with the object of putting her out of the way on the first favorable opportunity. Having learned one day that Ali had set out on a distant expedition at the head of his best soldiers, they took Tepalen by surprise under cover of the darkness, seized Kamco and her daughter Chaïnitza, and carried them off to Kardiki. Their first intention was to put them to death, and there were not wanting sufficient charges to justify such a proceeding; but their beauty saved them; it was thought best to take vengeance by satisfying their lust rather than by murder. The women

were imprisoned all day and released at night only to be victimized by those men who had been selected by lot in the morning to possess them. This lasted a month, at the end of which time a Greek from Argyrokastron, G. Malicovo, was so touched by their horrible fate that he ransomed them for twenty thousand piastres, and took them back to Tepalen.

Ali had just returned. His mother and sister came to him, pale with exhaustion and shame and rage. They told him all that had taken place, shrieking and weeping, and Kamco added, staring wildly into his face:

"My son! my son! my soul will know no peace until Kormovo and Kardiki are razed to the ground by thy scimetar, and can no longer gloat over my dishonor."

Ali, whose bloodthirsty passions were thoroughly aroused by their appearance and their tale, promised that his vengeance should be proportioned to the outrage, and set to work with all his might to put himself in condition to keep his word. A worthy son of his father, he had begun life after the manner of the heroes of ancient times, stealing sheep and goats, and at the age of fourteen had gained as great a reputation in that regard as the divine son of Jupiter and Maïa. When he reached man's estate his operations were on a much larger scale. At the time at which we have arrived, he had long since begun to pillage by force and without concealment. His plunder, added to the savings of his mother, who, since her return from Kardiki, had withdrawn entirely from public life, and devoted herself to household cares, soon enabled him to collect a band of sufficient size to justify an expedition against Kormovo, that one of the two towns which he had sworn to destroy. He marched against it at the head of his partisans, but encountered an unexpectedly sharp resistance,

and after losing part of his men was compelled to take flight with the rest. He did not stop short of Tepalen, where he met with a harsh reception from Kamco, whose resentment was balked by his defeat.

"Coward!" she exclaimed, "go and spin with the women in the harem; the distaff is better suited to your use than the scimetar!"

The youth made no reply, but he was deeply wounded by her reproaches, and went off to hide his humiliation in the bosom of his old friends, the mountains. Popular tradition, always greedy of marvels for its heroes, avers that he found in the ruins of a church a treasure which enabled him to recruit his faction. But he himself contradicted that fable, and it was by his usual methods, war and pillage, that he succeeded in re-establishing his fortune after some little time. He selected thirty trusty Palicares from among the companions of his wanderings, and, as their *boulouibachi*, or chief, entered the service of the Pacha of Negropont. But he soon tired of the almost regular life he was compelled to lead, and went into Thessaly, where he plied the trade of highwayman, still in the footsteps of his father Veli. Thence he betook himself to the Pindus mountains, pillaged many villages there, and returned to Tepalen, richer and consequently more esteemed than ever.

He used his wealth and his credit to equip a formidable force of guerillas, and began his predatory excursions once more. Kourd Pacha was soon compelled, at the unanimous demand of the province, to take rigorous measures against the young tyrant of the highways. He sent a whole army corps against him, and he was defeated and taken in chains with his troops to Berat, the capital of Middle Albania, and residence of the governor. The province congratulated itself on being

at last delivered from the scourge, and in fact, the whole band was sentenced to death. But Ali was not the man to surrender his life so easily. While his companions were being hanged, he threw himself at the pacha's feet, and begged for pardon in the name of their kinship, laying the blame for his misdeeds upon his youth, and promising to amend his ways permanently.

The pacha, gazing upon the comely youth, fair haired, blue-eyed, with winning voice and eloquent speech, in whose veins flowed the same blood as in his own, was moved to pity and pardoned him. Ali was quit of the affair for a term of mild imprisonment in the palace of his powerful kinsman, who overwhelmed him with kindness, and did his utmost to lead him back into the path of probity. Ali seemed to yield to this healthy influence, and to regret bitterly his past errors. After a few years, being convinced of his conversion, and moved by the entreaties of Kamco, who incessantly prayed for the freedom of her dear son, the generous pacha set him at liberty, warning him that he need never hope for pardon again if he thought best to disturb the public peace. Ali, looking upon this as a serious threat, did not venture to defy it, but, on the other hand, did all that he could to earn the good-will of the man whose wrath he dared not incur. Not only did he keep the promise he had made to lead a quiet life, but his exemplary conduct soon cast the veil of forgetfulness over his evil past, as he took pains to make himself useful to all his neighbors, and by dint of his services formed a great number of pleasant connections and friendships.

In this way he soon won for himself an honorable place among the beys of the province; and, as he was of marriageable age, he succeeded in obtaining the daughter of Capelan, the Tiger, Pacha of Delvino, who

lived at Argyrokastron. This union was doubly happy, in that it assured him, with one of the most accomplished women in Epirus, an eminent position, and great influence.

This marriage bade fair to turn aside Ali forever from his turbulent habits of former days, and his adventurous exploits. But the family which he entered exhibited striking contrasts, and contained as powerful elements of evil as of good. While Emineh, his wife, was a model of all the virtues, her father Capelan, was the incarnation of all the vices; selfish, ambitious, aggressive, fierce, strong in his own personal daring, and emboldened by his distance from the capital, the Pacha of Delvino took delight in violating every law, and gloried in defying all authority.

Ali too closely resembled this man by nature not to gauge his character very quickly. He at once descended to his level, and became his accomplice, pending an opportunity to come forth as his enemy and successor. He had not long to wait for the opportunity.

Capelan's object in bestowing his daughter's hand upon Tepalen was to create a party favorable to himself among the beys, and thus forward his desire for independence, the chimera of all the viziers. The crafty youth feigned to accede to his father-in-law's views, and did his utmost to incite him to rebellion.

An adventurer named Stephano Piccolo, put forward by Russia, had raised the standard of the Cross in Albania, and called upon all the Christians of the Acrocerannian mountains to take up arms. The divan ordered all the pachas of the north to march at once against the insurgents, and to drown the insurrection in blood.

Instead of obeying the orders of the divan and joining

Kourd Pacha, who had called upon him for assistance, Capelan, at his son-in-law's instigation, set about impeding the movements of the imperial troops in every possible way; and without openly making common cause with the insurgents he gave them valuable assistance. However they were beaten and dispersed, and their leader, Stephano Piccolo, took refuge in the caverns of Montenegro.

The conflict was no sooner ended than Capelan was summoned, as Ali anticipated, to answer for his conduct before the Romily Valicy, the chief judicial officer of Turkey in Europe. Not only were charges of the utmost seriousness preferred against him, but the very person who had advised him to disobey sent proofs of his guilt to the divan. There could be no doubt as to the result of the trial, and so the pacha, who had no suspicion of his son-in-law, determined not to leave his government. This determination did not fall in with the views of Ali, whose heart was set upon inheriting his father-in-law's wealth as well as his office. He therefore remonstrated with him most sagely as to the uselessness and danger of resistance. To decline to justify himself was to admit his guilt, and to draw down upon his head a tempest which nothing could avert, while, on the other hand, if he obeyed the Romily Valicy's summons he would find it easy to clear his skirts. To emphasize his own advice, Ali at the same time set the innocent Emineh at work to convince her father, having aroused her fears concerning his probable fate. Overborne by his son-in-law's arguments and his daughter's tears, the ill-fated pacha at last consented to go to Monastir, where he was cited to appear. He was at once arrested and beheaded.

Ali's scheme had succeeded; but his ambition and his

greed were equally disappointed. Ali, Bey of Argyrokastron, who had always been a consistent and devoted adherent of the Sultan, was appointed Pacha of Delvino in Capelan's stead. He at once confiscated all the property of the culprit, as belonging to the Sultan, and thus deprived Ali Tepalen of all the fruits of his crime.

Less than that would have sufficed to kindle his hatred. He swore to have condign vengeance for the spoliation of which he claimed to be the victim. But circumstances were not favorable for the execution of his projects. The murder of Capelan, which the murderer looked upon at first as a crime simply, became, by its results, a mistake. Tepalen's numerous enemies, who had kept out of sight during the administration of the late pacha, through dread of his heavy hand, made haste to show themselves under the new official, whose support they saw every reason to hope for. Ali saw the danger, sought and soon found a way to obviate it. He began by transforming his most powerful adversary into his closest ally. He strove hard to unite Ali of Argyrokastron, who was still unmarried, to Chaïnitza, his sister of the full blood, and finally succeeded. This marriage restored him to the position he occupied in the government of Capelan the Tiger. But that was not enough. He was determined to place himself out of reach of such vicissitudes of fortune as he had theretofore experienced, and to establish himself upon a firm foundation of power, which the breath of adverse events could not overthrow. His plan was soon formed. With his own mouth he described this period of his career to the French consul.

"The years rolled by," he said, "and brought about no great change in my position. I was a famous

partisan, no doubt, and had powerful allies, but for all that I had neither title nor office. I became convinced therefore that what I must do was build myself a solid foundation in the place where I was born. I had friends there, ready to follow my fortunes, and help to advance them, and I must turn their devotion to good account; I also had powerful foes there, thirsting for my ruin, and them I must crush, unless I chose to be crushed by them. I cast about for some means of exterminating them in a body, and I finally conceived the plan with which I should have begun my career. By so doing I should have saved much time and spared myself a vast amount of hard work.

"Every day, after hunting, I was accustomed to take my noonday siesta under the trees in a neighboring wood. One of my trustiest followers suggested to my enemies that they watch me go there and murder me. I myself drew up the plan of the conspiracy which was adopted. On the appointed day I went in advance of my adversaries to the rendezvous, and caused a goat to be bound and muzzled and laid on the ground where I usually lay; he was covered with my cloak, and I returned to my seraglio by a long détour.

"Soon after my departure the conspirators arrived, and fired at the goat. They were running forward to make sure that I was dead, when they were brought to a standstill by a detachment of my own people, who suddenly stepped out from a thicket where I had stationed them, and compelled them to return to Tepalen. They entered the town, mad with delight, crying: 'Ali Bey is no more; we are delivered from him!'

"When this news reached the interior of the harem, I heard the shrieks of my mother and my wife mingling with the exultant shouts of my enemies. I allowed the

excitement to reach its height, and everyone to manifest his sentiments, kind or the reverse, at his ease. But when the joy of the one and the grief of the other could go no farther, when my would-be murderers, after shouting themselves hoarse over their victory, had drowned their prudence and their courage in wine, then, strong in the righteousness of my cause, I appeared. It was my friends' turn to exult, and my foes' to tremble. I set to work at the head of my band, and before the sun rose again I had exterminated my enemies to the last man. I distributed their estates, their houses, and their gold among my creatures, and from that moment I could say that Tepalen was mine."

Another than Ali might have been content with this result; but Ali looked upon the lordship of a canton as a means to an end, and not as the end itself, and he had seized Tepalen, not as a domain, but simply as a base of operations.

He had sought the alliance of Ali of Argyrokastron to assist him in putting his enemies out of the way, and now that his purpose was accomplished he turned against him. He had forgotten neither his vengeance nor his ambitious plans. Always as prudent in execution as he was daring in undertaking, he had no idea of attacking in front a more powerful man than himself, and looked to stratagem for the results he could not attain by violence. The loyal, trustful nature of his brother-in-law promised speedy success to his perfidy. He began his experiments with his sister Chaïnitza and proposed to her several times to poison her husband. But she was deeply attached to the pacha, who treated her with great kindness and had already made her the mother of two children; so that she rejected her brother's suggestions with horror, and finally threatened to divulge his criminal

purpose if he persisted in it. Ali, fearing that she would put her threat in execution, humbly begged her to forgive his evil thoughts, professed sincere repentance, and began to speak of his brother-in-law with the most profound respect. The comedy was played so well, that Chaïnitza, well as she knew her brother, was deceived by it. When he saw that he had calmed her fears and had nothing to dread or to hope from her, he turned to another.

The pacha had a brother Soliman, whose character and disposition were not unlike Tepalen's. The latter, after studying him for some time in silence, saw that he was the man he needed; he suggested to him that he should kill his brother, and promised him, if he consented, his whole inheritance and the hand of Chaïnitza, reserving for himself nothing but the *sangiac*, to which he had long aspired. His propositions were accepted by Soliman, and the fratricidal bargain was concluded. The two partners in crime, sole possessors of their secret, whose very ghastliness was a sufficient guaranty of their mutual good faith, and being constantly admitted on intimate terms to the presence of their destined victim, could hardly fail of success.

One day when they were both received by the pacha in private audience, Soliman, seizing the opportunity when his brother's eyes were turned away from him, drew a pistol from his belt and blew out his brains. Chaïnitza heard the report, and hurried to the spot, and there saw her husband lying dead between her brother and brother-in-law. She tried to call for help; but they checked her and threatened her with death if she took a step or uttered a sound. As she stood transfixed with grief and fear, Ali made a sign to Soliman, who threw his pelisse over her and declared her his wife. Ali

pronounced the marriage duly concluded, and left the room to allow it to be consummated.

Thus were celebrated those terrible nuptials, in the very bosom of the crime, beside the still reeking body of him who an instant before was the husband of the bride and the brother of the groom.

The assassins made public the pacha's death, attributing it, as the fashion is in Turkey, to a sudden stroke of apoplexy. But the truth was not long in extricating itself from the mist of falsehood which encompassed it. Popular belief even exceeded the reality, and made Chaïnitza an accomplice in the crime of which she was only a witness. In truth, appearances justified this belief to a certain extent. The young woman was speedily consoled for the loss of her first husband in the arms of the second, and her son by the former died suddenly within a short time, as if to leave Soliman the lawful heir of his brother's possessions. As the daughter had no rights and could do no harm, she was allowed to live, and was afterward married to a bey of Cleïsoura, who was destined to play a tragic part in the history of the Tepalen family.

Ali was once more cheated out of the fruit of his bloody schemes. In spite of all his intriguing, the *Sangiac* of Delvino was not conferred upon him, but upon a bey belonging to one of the first families of Zapouria. But he was far from being discouraged, and resumed with fresh ardor and greater confidence than ever the task, so many times begun and so many times interrupted, of effecting his own elevation. He profited by his ever growing influence to form an alliance with the new pacha, and insinuated himself so thoroughly into his confidence, that he was received in his seraglio, and treated by him as if he were his son. He seized

the opportunity to instruct himself as to all the details of the pachalik, and all the private affairs of the pacha, thus qualifying himself to govern the latter in case he should lose the former.

The frontier of the *Sangiac* of Delvino marched with the district of Buthrotum belonging to Venice. Selim, who was a better neighbor and a more clever politician than his neighbors, set himself to establish and afterward to maintain friendly and commercial intercourse with the *proveditori* of the magnificent republic. This judicious course, which was equally advantageous to both provinces, instead of bringing the pacha the praise and preferment which it deserved, soon made him an object of suspicion at a court whose only political idea was hatred of the name of Christian, and whose only method of government was by terror.

Ali at once saw what a mistake the pacha had committed, and the advantage he might himself derive from it. The opportunity that he awaited soon presented itself. Selim, in pursuance of his commercial arrangements with the Venetians, sold them the right to cut timber for a certain number of years in a forest near Lake Pelodus. Ali at once took occasion to denounce the pacha for aliening the territory of the Sublime Porte, and for an alleged intention to place the whole province of Delvino little by little in the hands of the unfaithful. Concealing his ambitious designs behind the veil of religion and patriotism, he bewailed, in his denunciatory report, the fact that his duty as a loyal subject and faithful Mussulman compelled him to accuse a man who had been his benefactor; thus he secured at one blow the fruits of his crime, and the honor due to incorruptible virtue.

Under the mysterious government of the Turks, any

man invested with power of any description is convicted almost as soon as he is accused; and if he is not powerful enough to be feared, he is lost beyond recall. Ali received at Tepalen, to which place he had withdrawn in order to weave his perfidious schemes at his leisure, the order to put the pacha out of the way. On receipt of the fatal firman he fairly leaped for joy, and hastened to Delvino to seize the prey thus given over to him.

The noble Selim, having no suspicion that his grateful debtor of the day before had become his accuser and was about to become his executioner, received him more affectionately than ever, and furnished him with apartments in his palace as usual. Under the shelter of this hospitable roof Ali skillfully prepared to consummate the crime which was to draw him forth forever from obscurity. Every morning he paid his respects to the pacha, whose confidence in him grew apace. One day he pretended to be ill, and, lamenting his inability to go and pay his court to the man who had taught him to look upon him as a father, sent to him to request that he would deign to pass a moment in his apartment.

The invitation having been accepted he concealed divers assassins in one of those shelfless wardrobes, so common in the East, in which the mattresses are kept in the daytime, that are spread on the floor at night for the slaves to lie upon. At the appointed hour the old man arrived. Ali rose from his sofa with a suffering expression to go and meet him, kissed the hem of his robe, and having led him to a seat, offered him with his own hand a pipe and coffee, which were accepted. But instead of placing the cup in the hand held out to receive it, he let it fall upon the floor, where it broke in a thousand pieces. It was the concerted signal. The assassins rushed forth from their hiding-place, and threw

themselves upon Selim, who fell, like Cæsar, crying: "*Et tu, Brute!*"

The uproar which followed the assassination attracted the attention of Selim's guards, who came running to the room, and found Ali standing, covered with blood, in the centre of a circle of assassins, holding the firman unfolded in his hand, and crying in a menacing voice:

"I have killed Selim, the traitor, by order of our glorious sultan; here is his imperial command."

At these words and the sight of the death-dealing diploma, every man bowed to the floor, frozen with terror. Ali, after ordering Selim's head cut off, which he seized upon as a trophy, ordered the cadi, the beys and the Greek archons to assemble at the palace, for the purpose of drawing up the report of the execution of the sentence. They came together in fear and trembling; the sacred hymn of the Fatahat was intoned, and the murder declared legal in the name of the just and merciful God, sovereign of all worlds.

When the seals had been placed upon the victim's property, the murderer left the seraglio, taking with him as hostage, Mustapha, Selim's son, who was destined to a more unhappy fate than his father.

A few days later the divan awarded to Ali Tepalen, as a reward for his zeal for the state and for the faith, the Sangiac of Thessaly, with the title of dervendgi-pacha, or grand provost of highroads. This last dignity was bestowed on condition that he should raise a body of four thousand men to free the valley of the Peneus of a number of Christian chiefs who wielded more authority there than the sultan's officers. The new pacha grasped the opportunity to organize a large band of Albanians, ready for any undertaking, and devoted to his person. Clothed with two important

functions, and supported by this imposing force, he betook himself to Trikala, the chief town of his government, where he acquired extensive influence.

His first official act was to declare a war of extermination upon the Armatolis, or Christian men-at-arms, who infested the lowlands. He laid violent hands upon such as he was able to reach, and forced the others back into their mountains, where, weakened and divided, they formed little else than reserve forces at his disposal. He sent a few heads to Constantinople at the same time, to amuse the sultan and the populace, and money to the ministers to win their adhesion to his interests:

"For," said he, "water sleeps, but envy never sleeps."

His plans were shrewdly laid, and while his credit was increasing at court, his name became so feared in his province, that order was restored from the Pendus to the Vale of Tempe and the Pass of Thermopylæ.

His successful exercise of the functions of provost, exaggerated as everything is exaggerated in the East, confirmed previous estimates of the capacity of Ali-Pacha. Thirsting for celebrity he took pains to propagate his fame himself, narrating his exploits to every comer, showing a princely liberality to those of the sultan's officers, who visited his government, and exhibiting to travelers the courtyards of his palace, surrounded with severed heads. But what contributed more than anything else to solidify his power was the vast wealth which he amassed by all sorts of methods. He never struck a blow for the mere pleasure of striking, and the innumerable victims of his proscriptions were sacrificed to his thirst for wealth and power. His death decrees always fell upon the beys and other opulent persons whose wealth he coveted. The axe was to him

simply an instrument of wealth-getting, and the headsman a collector of tolls.

After he had governed Thessaly in this fashion for some years, he found himself in a position to bargain for the Sangiac of Janina, the possession of which, by placing Epirus in his power, would enable him to crush all his enemies, and to rule the destinies of the three Albanias.

But in order to make himself master of Janina, he must first dispose of the pacha who was invested with the government. Luckily he was a weak, apathetic person, incapable in every respect of holding out against so formidable a rival as Ali, who soon conceived and began to put in execution the plan which was to bring about the fulfillment of his desires. He came to an understanding with the same Armatolis, whom he had lately subjected to such severe discipline, and turned them loose, well supplied with arms and ammunition, upon the government of which he wished to gain possession. Soon one heard of nothing but brigandage and rapine. The pacha, powerless to repel the incursions of the mountaineers, employed the small forces at his disposal in grinding down the inhabitants of the lowlands, who being victimized by excessive taxation and pillage at the same time, uttered their despairing appeals to deaf ears. Ali flattered himself that the divan which ordinarily does not decide until after the event, seeing Epirus given over to devastation, while Thessaly was flourishing under his administration, would speedily unite the two governments in his hand; but the course of his political manœuvring was interrupted for an instant by an event which concerned him in his private capacity.

Kamco had been ill for a long time with uterine cancer, the result of her depraved life. When she felt that

death was at hand she dispatched courier after courier to her son to summon him to her side. He set out at once, but arrived too late and found his sister Chaïnitza alone, weeping over a corpse. Kamco had breathed her last an hour earlier in her daughter's arms; in a frenzy of rage, and pouring forth imprecations against heaven, she had solemnly charged her children, on pain of her malediction, to execute faithfully her last wishes. Ali and Chaïnitza, after their grief had worn itself out, read together the testament in which those last wishes were set forth. It ordered a few assassinations of private individuals, designated the villages which were to be burned some day or other, and was especially emphatic in the provision that the inhabitants of Kormovo and Kardiki, whose slave she had been, should be exterminated at the earliest possible moment. Having advised her children to remain one in purpose, to enrich their soldiers, and to make no account of those persons of whom they had no need, she ended by ordering them to send a pilgrim to Mecca in her name, and to lay an offering upon the prophet's tomb for the repose of her soul. When they had read the document through, Ali and Chaïnitza joined hands and swore upon their estimable mother's lifeless remains to fulfill her last wishes.

They took thought at first concerning the pilgrimage. As no one can send a pilgrim to Mecca, nor proffer gifts at Medina, except with money derived from landed property acquired by legitimate means, and sold for that purpose, the brother and sister submitted the various properties of their family to a searching scrutiny. After much profitless searching they thought they had found what they wanted in an estate producing about fifteen hundred francs income, which came to them from their great-great grandfather, founder of the dynasty of

Tepalen. But when they came to investigate the source of their ownership, they discovered that it was originally stolen from a Christian. They were fain, therefore, to abandon all thought of the pious pilgrimage, and the blessed offering. They promised themselves that they would make up for the impossibility of making expiation by the amplitude of their vengeance, and they took an oath to pursue unremittingly and crush without pity all the enemies of their family.

The surest way for Ali to keep this terrible oath was to take up his scheme of aggrandizement where he had dropped it. He succeeded in obtaining investiture of the *Sangiac* of Janina, which was accorded him by the Porte upon the onerous condition that he conquer the right to rule there. It was an ancient custom, well suited to the bellicose nature of the Osmanlis, to assign provinces or cities which disregarded the authority of the sultan to anyone who could make himself master of them. Janina was in that category. Being peopled in great measure by Albanians, it professed the most enthusiastic zeal for anarchy, which was there embellished with the name of liberty. The people fancied themselves independent because they made a great deal of noise. Everyone was as securely intrenched in his own house, as in the mountain fastnesses from which he came, and never went out except to the marketplace to bear a hand in the battles of his faction. As to the pachas, they were consigned to the old castle on the lake, and were dismissed at the pleasure of their subjects.

Thus there was a unanimous shout of remonstrance when Ali-Pacha's appointment became known; and all parties agreed that a man whose disposition and force of character were equally dreaded should not be allowed to pass the walls of the city. As he did not choose to put

forth all his strength in an open attack upon a warlike people, and preferred a longer and safer road to a short but perilous one, he began to destroy the towns and farms belonging to the most prominent of his adversaries. These tactics were successful. Those who had been the first to vow everlasting hatred to the prostitute's son, and had sworn the loudest that they would die rather than bend the knee to the tyrant, when they found that their property was being looted by soldiers day after day, became apprehensive that they would be utterly ruined if hostilities continued, and took measures in concert to bring them to an end. They sent envoys to Ali secretly, proposing to receive him in Janina, if he would agree to respect the lives and property of his new allies. He promised whatever they asked, and made his entry into the city during the night. His first thought was to call upon the cadi, whom he compelled to record and make public his firman of investiture.

The same year that witnessed his accession to this high office which had been the desire and the goal of his whole life, witnessed also the death of Sultan Abdulhamid, whose two sons, Mustapha and Mahmond, were imprisoned in the old seraglio. But Ali lost nothing by this change of rulers; the pacific Selim, released from the prison to which his nephews were consigned, to succeed his brother upon the throne, confirmed the Pacha of Janina in the titles, offices and privileges which had been conferred upon him.

Being confirmed in his tenure of office by this twofold investiture Ali turned his attention to the task of making it permanent. He was at this time fifty years old, and his intellectual development was complete; experience had been his master, and every event, no matter how unimportant, had its lesson for him; his

uncultivated, but keen and well-balanced mind quickly grasped the meaning of facts, analyzed causes and foresaw results, and as no sentimental feeling ever disturbed his schemes, as the heart never interfered in the operations of his intellect, he had finally, by reasoning from point to point, adopted an inflexible rule of conduct. This man, who knew nothing of the history of Europe, or her modes of thought, but who did know mankind, actually divined the previous existence of a Machiavelli, and as a natural consequence of his essentially energetic and practical nature, succeeded in realizing his ideals. We are now about to witness the development of his grandeur, and his manner of exercising his power. With no belief in God and utter contempt for men, with no affection or consideration for any other than himself, distrusting everybody about him, audacious in the conception of his plans, and inflexible in his determination, pitiless in his vengeance, insolent and humble, violent and gentle by turns, as various as the circumstances under which he acted, and always logical and consistent in his selfishness, he was Cæsar Borgia turned Mussulman; he was the incarnate ideal of Florentine politics, the Prince set at work in a satrapy.

Age had in no way impaired his faculties or lessened his energy, and there was nothing to prevent his making the most of his advantages. He already possessed great wealth, which he was adding to every day; he had at his disposal a considerable number of soldiers, inured to war and devoted to himself; and he held the three offices of Pacha with Two Tails of Janina, Toparch of Thessaly and provost of highways; furthermore, as instruments of the influence which his reputation, the terror of his arms, and his official position assured him, he had by his side the two sons born to him by his

wife Emineh—Mouktar and Veli, both grown to man's estate, and both educated in their father's principles.

His first care, when he was once master of Janina, was to break the power of the beys who formed a sort of aristocracy there, of whose hatred for him he was well aware, and whose scheming he feared. He ruined them all, exiled many, and put some to death. With their property, having learned the necessity of gaining friends at the same time that one makes away with one's enemies, he enriched the Albanian mountaineers whom he had in his pay, and who were known as Skipetars. On them he conferred most of the important offices. But, as he was too shrewd to put all the power in the hands of a single caste, although its members were strangers in the capital, he put in practice the extraordinary innovation of intermingling Greek Catholics, with them a clever, but despised class, whose talents he utilized without having to dread their influence.

While he was thus at work on the one hand, weakening the power of his enemies, and despoiling them of their offices and their wealth, and on the other hand, solidifying his own power by inaugurating a strong administration, he neglected no means of making himself popular. A fervent follower of Mahomet to the fanatical Mussulmans, a materialist to Bektagis, who professed a crude sort of pantheism, and a Christian to the Greeks, with whom he drank to the health of the Blessed Virgin, he made partisans everywhere by riding everybody's hobby. But although he was perpetually changing his opinions and his language to suit those of his subordinates whom he wished to propitiate, he had adopted toward his superiors a rule of conduct from which he never departed. He was always obsequious to the Sublime Porte, so long as his private authority was not

attacked, and not only was scrupulously prompt in his periodical remittances to the sultan, to whom he frequently advanced considerable sums, but he also pensioned all the influential members of the ministry. He made it a point to have no enemies among those who had it in their power to injure him, and he knew that in an absolute monarchy there is no conviction so firm that gold will not shake it.

When he had humbled the grandees, won over the multitude by specious phrases, and lulled the vigilance of the divan to sleep, Ali determined to lead an expedition against Kormovo. At the foot of its cliffs he had in his younger days tasted the ignominy of defeat; in the arms of its warriors Kamco and Chaïnitza had for thirty nights undergone the horrors of enforced prostitution, and thus the implacable pacha had a twofold hatred to satisfy, a twofold vengeance to exact.

He was more cautious on this occasion than before, and resorted to treachery to supplement armed force. When he came before the town he sent a flag of truce to promise amnesty for all in respect of the past, and substantial recompense for some. The towns-people, being only too glad to come to terms with so redoubtable a foe, asked and obtained a truce while the terms were being arranged. It was the opportunity Ali was waiting for. Kormovo, relying upon the observance of the truce, abandoned all precautions, and was attacked and carried by surprise. All those who, owing to the suddenness of the assault, had not time to fly, perished during the night by the sword, or on the following day by the hand of the executioner. The persons who were concerned in the outrage upon Ali's mother and sister were diligently sought for, and all those who were accused of participation therein, whether

convicted or not, were torn with red hot tongs, and spitted and roasted before a slow fire between two braziers; the women were shaved and scourged on the public square, and then sold as slaves.

This stroke of vengeance, which all the beys in the province who were not entirely ruined were compelled to approve, brought the pacha all the fruits of a glorious victory; towns, cantons, whole districts were terror-stricken, and submitted to his authority without striking a blow; and his name, in conjunction with the story of a massacre which was looked upon by these savage people as a glorious exploit, reverberated, like the echoing thunder, from valley to valley, and from mountain to mountain.

As he desired that all those who accompanied him should share his gratification at his success Ali gave his army a magnificent fête. He was the most agile Albanian of his day, and was Mohammedan only in name, and he led in person the Pyrrhic and Klephtic dances, the former of which was practiced by soldiers, and the latter by bandits. The guests were regaled with wine, and with sheep, lambs and goats, roasted before enormous fires, fed with the ruins of the town; they indulged in the ancient sports of shooting at a mark and wrestling, and the victors received the prizes from their leader's hand. The booty, the slaves and the flocks were divided, and the Iapyges, who were looked upon as the lowest of the four tribes comprised in the race of Skipetars, and were treated as the refuse of the army, carried off into the mountains of Acroceraunia doors, windows, nails, and even the tiles from the houses, all of which were burned to the ground.

Meanwhile, Ibrahim, son-in-law and successor of Kourd-Pacha, Pacha of Berat, being naturally unable

to look on as an indifferent spectator while a portion of his sangiac was invaded by his ambitious neighbor, remonstrated and negotiated, and failing to obtain satisfaction dispatched an army corps composed of Skipetars and Toxides, Islamites, all commanded by his brother Sepher, Bey of Avlona. Ali, whose deliberate policy it was to put forward the Cross against the Crescent, and the Crescent against the Cross by turns, summoned to his assistance the Christian captains of the mountainous country, who came down into the plains at the head of their savage hordes. As is almost always the case in Albania, where war is simply an excuse for brigandage, instead of settling the quarrel in a pitched battle, they contented themselves on one side and the other, with burning villages, hanging peasants and stealing cattle.

In accordance with the custom of the country the women mediated between the two parties, and the gentle, kindly Emineh was the bearer of conditions of peace to Ibrahim Pacha, whose indolent disposition forbade his remaining long in a difficult position, and who was only too well pleased to make peace on terms which were almost satisfactory to him. An alliance was entered into between the two families, and it was agreed that Ali should retain his conquests, which were deemed to have been brought to his eldest son Mouktar by Ibrahim's eldest daughter as her marriage portion.

Ibrahim fervently hoped that the peace would endure for a long while, but the nuptials which put the seal to the treaty were no sooner at an end than discord broke out afresh between the two pachas. Ali, having extorted such valuable concessions from his neighbor's weakness, was sanguine of his ability to extort others. But there were in Ibrahim's immediate family two persons endowed

with uncommon intelligence and determination, whose relations to him gave them great influence over him. They were his wife Zaidee, and his brother Sepher, the latter of whom had borne a prominent part in the recent war. As both of them were obnoxious to Ali, who could not hope to corrupt them, he determined to put them out of the way.

In his youth he was made welcome in Kourd-Pacha's family circle, and had tried to seduce his daughter, who was already married to Ibrahim. He was surprised by the latter in the act of scaling the wall of his harem, and was compelled to fly from the pacha's court. Being now resolved to destroy the woman he had once sought to dishonor, he set about making use of his earlier attempt to forward the success of a new scheme. Anonymous letters, which came mysteriously to Ibrahim's hands, warned him that his wife proposed to poison him in order to marry Ali-Pacha, whom she had never ceased to love. In a country like Turkey, where a woman is accused as soon as suspected, and condemned as soon as accused, such a calumny was likely to cause the innocent Zaidee's death. But indolent and weak as Ibrahim was, he was trustful and generous. He went at once to his wife, who easily justified herself, and warned him against the slanderer, whose schemes and purpose she quickly divined. Thus this odious attempt resulted in Ali's discomfiture. But he was not the man to be disturbed by what any one might say or think of him, or to be discouraged by ill-success. He therefore turned all his artillery against that one of his enemies whom he had not yet attacked, and so arranged matters that he could not miss his aim.

He sent to Zagora, a canton famous for its physicians, for a charlatan, whom he persuaded by the promise of

forty purses to poison Sepher Bey. When the plans were fully matured the villain set out for Berat. Immediately after his departure the pacha accused him of flight, ordered the arrest of his wife and children as accessories thereto, and detained them apparently as hostages for his fidelity, but really as pledges of his discretion when he should have fulfilled his mission of crime.

Sepher Bey, being informed of this harsh proceeding by the letters that Ali wrote to the Pacha of Berat to claim his fugitive, concluded that a man who was so persecuted by his personal foe deserved his confidence, and he took him into his service. The charlatan adroitly profited by the kindly inclination of his credulous patron to worm himself into his confidence; he soon became his confidential man, his physician and his apothecary, and the first time that he was a little indisposed administered poison as a remedy. As soon as the first symptoms of approaching death appeared, he fled with the assistance of Ali's emissaries, who thronged the court of Berat, and presented himself at Janina to receive the promised blood-money. The pacha thanked him for his zeal, complimented him upon his dexterity, and referred him to his treasurer. But as the poisoner left the seraglio on the way to receive the pay for his crime, he was seized by the executioners who were awaiting him, and hanged on the spot.

By the speedy punishment thus meted out to the murderer of Sepher Bey, Ali at a single stroke paid the debt he had contracted, removed the only witness he had cause to fear, and demonstrated his regard for the victim. But not content with these results he sought to direct suspicion upon Ibrahim's wife, who was, so he said, jealous of her step-brother's influence in the household. He explained the murder in this way to all who

would listen to him, and wrote in the same vein to his creatures at Constantinople and wherever else his interest extended, to defame a family whose ruin he desired because he craved their possessions. He soon seized upon the scandal he had himself originated as a pretext for avenging "his friend," Sepher Bey, and was preparing for fresh incursions, when he was thwarted by Ibrahim Pacha, who arrayed against him the league of the Christians of Thesprotia, at the head of whom were the Souliotes, famous throughout Albania for their bravery and their love of independence.

After several battles, in which his enemies generally had the advantage, Ali began to negotiate, and ended by concluding an offensive and defensive alliance with Ibrahim. This new reconciliation was sealed as the previous one had been by a marriage. The virtuous Emineh, when her son Veli was united to Ibrahim's second daughter, hoped that misunderstandings between the two families were at an end forever, and her happiness knew no bounds. But it was destined to be of brief duration; once more the death rattle was mingled with the festal music.

Chaïnitza's daughter by her first husband had married one Mourad, Bey of Cleïsoura. This nobleman, who was allied to Ibrahim Pacha by ties of blood and of friendship, had become, since Sepher's death, an object of hatred to Ali. The real reason of this hatred was Mourad's devotion to his patron, over whom he had very great influence, and from whom it was impossible to detach him. But Ali, who was always clever at hiding the truth under specious pretences, alleged in explanation of his well-known antipathy for the youth, that he, although he was his nephew by marriage, had fought several times against him in the ranks of his enemies.

Worthy Ibrahim took advantage of the marriage about to be solemnized to arrange an honorable reconciliation between the Bey of Cleïsoura and his uncle, and appointed the former *godfather of the nuptial crown.* In this capacity it became his duty to escort the Pacha of Berat's daughter to Janina and place her in the arms of young Veli Bey. This duty he performed successfully, and was received by Ali with manifestations of the greatest good-will. The marriage fêtes began upon his arrival, toward the end of November, 1791.

They had been in progress several days; suddenly it was reported that a shot had been fired at Ali, who had escaped death only by the merest chance, and that his would-be murderer could not be found. This news spread terror through the city and the palace; every one trembled lest he should be accused of the crime. The spies moved heaven and earth to find the culprit, but declared at last that the search was hopeless, whence they concluded that there was a conspiracy against the pacha's life. He thereupon complained bitterly that he was surrounded by enemies, and announced that thenceforth he would receive but one visitor at one time, and that everyone must lay aside his weapons before entering the apartment specially set apart for audiences of this description. It was a room constructed over an archway, and had no other entrance than a trapdoor which was reached by a ladder.

After he had held court in this species of dovecot for several days, Ali summoned his nephew thither to deliver the wedding gifts. Mourad thought that he had been taken into favor once more, and gleefully received the congratulations of his friends. At the appointed hour he made his appearance. The Albanians on guard at the foot of the ladder demanded his weapons; he gave

them up without suspicion, and climbed up the ladder in a most hopeful frame of mind. But he had no sooner passed through the trapdoor, and closed it behind him, than a pistol shot from a dark corner shattered his shoulder, and stretched him on the floor. He rose and tried to make his escape, but Ali rushed out of his hiding-place to make an end of him. Notwithstanding his wound the young bey defended himself as best he could, shouting at the top of his voice. The pacha, in his haste to finish him, seeing that his hands were unequal to the task, seized a burning brand from the hearth, with which he struck his nephew in the face, felled him to the floor, and dispatched him.

Having consummated the deed of blood Ali began to roar to his guards to come to his assistance. When they answered his call he showed them the bruises he had received in the struggle, and pointed to the blood with which he was covered, and told them that he had killed the villain in self-defence as he was on the point of murdering him. He ordered his victim's clothes to be searched, and a letter was found in one of his pockets, which Ali had himself placed there, and which contained all the details of a pretended conspiracy.

As Mourad's brother was seriously compromised therein, he was forthwith seized and strangled without ceremony. The palace resumed its joyous aspect, and the pacha's thanksgiving to God took the shape of a sacrificial offering of beasts, still a common occurrence in the East when one has escaped some great danger. Ali set many prisoners at liberty, as he said, to show his gratitude to Providence, which had protected him from such a horrible plot; he received congratulatory visits, and put forth his *apologia*, with the official approval of the cadi, wherein the memory of Mourad and his brother

was aspersed. Lastly, commissioners were dispatched with a strong escort to seize the goods and chattels of the two brothers, because, so ran the decree, it was just that Ali should inherit from his assassins.

Thus was wiped out the only family which was still obnoxious to the Pacha of Janina, and which could counterbalance his influence over the weak-kneed Pacha of Berat. The latter, abandoned by his most gallant defenders, and feeling that he was at his enemy's mercy, was feign to resign himself to what he could not prevent, and tears were his only protest against these crimes which were so ominous of a terrible future for himself.

It is said that Emineh lived almost wholly apart from her homicidal husband from the day of this catastrophe, and passed her time, like a Christian, in the privacy of her harem, praying as well for the murderer as for his victims. It is pleasant, amid this saturnalia of blood, to allow one's eyes, wearied by the contemplation of such a conglomeration of atrocities and treachery, to rest upon this sweet and noble figure, like an oasis in this desert of crime.

But in her Ali lost the guardian angel who to some extent moderated the violence of his passions. At first he was grieved at his enforced separation from the woman who had up to that time possessed all his love, and he made many vain attempts to win her back to him. He thereupon resorted to a new vice in search of compensation for the happiness he had thrown away, and abandoned himself to carnal pleasures; and as he always brought the most unreasoning zeal to bear upon whatever he undertook, the fire of lust was soon kindled in his aged veins, and he carried his self-indulgence beyond all bounds. He had harems peopled with *odalisques* and with *icoglans;* and as if his palaces were not sufficient for his

needs, he assumed divers disguises, sometimes to haunt the streets at night in pursuit of dissolute persons of both sexes, and sometimes to visit the places of worship by day, to select young men and young women of notable personal attractions, who were then carried off to his harems.

His sons, following in his footsteps, also maintained scandalous establishments, and seemed inclined to dispute his pre-eminence in debauchery, each in his own specialty. Mouktar, the older of the two, had adopted the vice of drunkenness, and had no rival among the hard drinkers of Albania. He boasted that on one occasion after a hearty meal, he absorbed a full gallon of wine during the evening. True to the hereditary savagery of his family he killed several persons while in his cups, among others his sword-bearer, who was his playfellow in childhood, and his confidant all his life.

It was a different matter with Veli. Divining the Marquis de Sade, as his father had divined Machiavelli, he took delight in mingling licentiousness and cruelty together, and seasoning each with the other. Perfect happiness for him consisted in tearing with his teeth the lips that he kissed, and with his nails the faces that he caressed. The people of Janina have often seen with horror-stricken eyes more than one woman walking through the streets, whose noses or ears he had caused to be cut off when they left his arms.

Thus everybody was in deadly fear of loss of fortune, life, honor and kindred. Mothers cursed their fruitfulness, and women their beauty. But fear soon engendered corruption, and the subjects vied with their masters in depravity. This fell in with Ali's desires, who deemed it an easier matter to govern men in a demoralized condition.

While he was thus solidifying his authority within in every possible way, he let slip no opportunity of extending his influence outside his own domain. In 1803 he declared war on the Souliotes, whose independence he had several times, but to no purpose tried to purchase or to steal. The army that he sent against them, although it was ten thousand strong, was defeated at first in almost every engagement; thereupon, as his custom was, he resorted to treachery, and at once regained the advantage. It soon became evident that the unfortunate Souliotes must inevitably succumb sooner or later.

The virtuous Emineh, anticipating the horrors which would follow their defeat, was moved to pity for them; she emerged from her retirement and threw herself at her husband's feet. He raised her, seated her beside him, and questioned her as to the cause of her alarm. She spoke to him of generosity and clemency, and he listened irresolutely, apparently touched by what she said. At last she mentioned the Souliotes. Immediately, in a frenzy of rage, Ali seized a pistol and fired at her. She was not hit, but fright made her totter and fall; her women ran to her and carried her to her apartments. For the first time in his life perhaps Ali was cowed by the fear that he had committed murder. It was his wife, the mother of his children whom he had stretched at his feet; the thought haunted him and grieved him sorely. During the night he sought to see Emineh; he knocked at her door and called, and when they refused to open to him, he lost his head, and burst in the door of the room where she lay in bed. When she heard the fracas and saw her husband still in a furious rage, she believed that he had come to destroy the feeble remnant of her life; she fell into a deathly lethargy, her voice died upon her lips, and before many moments she expired in horrible convulsions.

Thus died Emineh, daughter of Capelan Pacha, wife of Ali Tepalen, mother of Mouktar and Veli, who was herself a model of virtue, and lived all her life amid models of vice.

Her death caused general mourning throughout Albania, and produced an equally keen impression upon the mind of her murderer. The spectre of his wife haunted him in his debauchery, in his hours of business, and even in his sleep. He saw her and heard her voice, and sometimes awoke with a start, crying: "My wife! my wife! 'tis she! She threatens me with her eyes; she is angry. Save me! Mercy!" For more than ten years he dared not go to bed unless some other person was in the room.

In the month of December, the Souliotes, decimated in battle, weakened by famine, and disheartened by treachery, were obliged to surrender. The treaty gave them the privilege of settling wherever they chose except in their mountains. The ill-fated tribesmen divided into two parties, one of which set out for Parga, the other for Prevesa. Ali had given orders that both parties were to be exterminated in defiance of the treaty.

The Parga division was attacked on the road and charged by a numerous body of Skipetars. It seemed as if they must yield to numbers; but suddenly instinct revealed to these unskilled warriors the only manœuvre that could save them; they formed a hollow square, placed the old men, women, children and beasts in the centre, and by dint of this eminently military manœuvre succeeded in entering Parga under the eyes of the cut-throats who pursued them to no purpose.

The Prevesa division was not so fortunate. Panic-stricken by a sudden, unforeseen attack, they fled in

disorder to a Greek convent, called Zalongos. But the doors were soon beaten down, and the wretched Souliotes were massacred to a man.

From the summit of a cliff on which their tents were pitched the women witnessed the horrible slaughter which deprived them of their protectors. The only possible future before them was slavery, and their only hope of life lay in submitting to the embraces of the murderers of their husbands and brothers. An heroic determination saved them from infamy; they joined hands, and began to dance around in a circle upon the rocky platform, singing their national hymn. As they finished the last refrain they uttered a prolonged, piercing shriek, and leaped down in a body with their children to the bottom of a horrible precipice.

All the Souliotes had not left their country when Ali Pacha went thither. He caused all those who were still there to be taken to Janina, and their punishment was the first spectacle in the fêtes that he gave his army. The imagination of every soldier was drawn upon to invent novel forms of torture, and the most ingenious were accorded the privilege of carrying out their ideas in person.

Some there were who made the Souliotes eat their own noses and ears, uncooked, but served up in the shape of a salad. One young man had his whole scalp removed in such a way that it fell down over his shoulders, and in that condition he was whipped around the courtyard of the seraglio. After he had sufficiently entertained the pacha, a lance was passed through his body, and he was thrown into the fire. A great number of unwounded prisoners were placed in boilers over the fire, and when they were thoroughly cooked their bodies were thrown to the dogs.

Thenceforth the cross was seen no more in the mountains of Selleide, and the echoes of Souli no longer repeated the Christian's consoling prayer.

While this war was in progress, a short time after Emineh's death, a ghastly drama was enacted in the pacha's family, whose criminal propensities were absolutely tireless. We have said that the father and sons, vying with one another in debauchery and scandalous conduct, had corrupted every one about them. This demoralization was destined to bear fruit of equal bitterness for all. The masters soon found suspicion, discord and hatred springing up between them, while their subjects had to endure tyranny of the most grinding description. The father was destined to wound his sons one after the other in their dearest affections, and they to avenge themselves by abandoning him in the hour of danger.

There was a certain woman at Janina named Euphrosine, the archbishop's niece, and wife to one of the wealthiest Greek merchants in the city; she was renowned for her wit and beauty, and was the mother of two children when Mouktar became enamored of her. He sent to her an imperative command to come to his palace. The wretched Euphrosine, suspecting that her presence was required to satisfy the pacha's lust, called her family together to decide what she should do. It was the unanimous opinion that she must obey, and as her husband's life was in danger because his redoubtable rival might become jealous of him, it was decided that he should leave the city the same evening, which he did. Euphrosine surrendered to Mouktar, who yielded to the softening influence of her charms, and soon fell sincerely in love with her, and loaded her with gifts and favors. Matters had progressed thus far

when the pacha was forced to leave the city upon an important expedition.

His back was no sooner turned than his wives hastened to lay before his father their complaints on the subject of Euphrosine, who usurped all their rights, and made their husband neglect them. Ali, who was forever lamenting the foolish extravagance of his sons, and regretting the money that they threw away, was not likely to miss the opportunity to strike a blow which would enrich him, and at the same time add to the terror of his name.

One night, attended by his satellites, he repaired to Euphrosine's house, and presented himself before her by torchlight. She was well aware of his cruelty and his avarice, and tried to disarm the one by catering to the other. She got together all her gold and jewels and laid them at his feet, gazing imploringly up at his face.

"This is simply my own property that you are restoring to me," he said, pocketing the princely offering; "but can you give me back Mouktar's heart which you have stolen from me?"

At these words Euphrosine conjured him by his father's heart, by that son, whose love had already brought misery upon her, and was her only crime, to spare a mother hitherto without reproach. But her tears and sobs had no effect upon the old pacha, who ordered her to be seized and bound, and she was then taken to the prison of the seraglio, covered with a piece of coarse cloth.

While it was clear that poor Euphrosine was lost beyond recall, it was hoped that the blow would fall upon none but her. But Ali, pretending that he was acting upon the advice of certain stern moralists, whose

aim it was to re-establish good morals, caused fifteen Christian ladies, belonging to the most respectable families of Janina, to be arrested at the same time. A Wallachian, named Nicolas Janco, seized the opportunity to denounce as an adulteress, and turn over to the pacha, his own wife, who was far advanced in pregnancy. The sixteen accused appeared in a body before the vizier's court to undergo a trial, the result of which was, as anticipated, sentence of death for all. They were taken to a dungeon where they passed two whole days in the agony of death. On the third night the executioners came to take them to the lake where they were to die. Poor Euphrosine was unable to endure the terrible agitation to the last, and expired on the road; when her body was thrown into the water with her compatriots, her soul had already ascended to heaven. Her body was found the next day, and was buried in holy ground in the monastery of SS. Anargyres, where her tomb, covered with white iris, may still be seen beneath a wild olive-tree.

Mouktar was returning from his expedition when a courier from his brother Veli handed him a letter containing the news of his mistress' death. He opened it.

"Euphrosine!" he cried; and, drawing a pistol, fired point-blank at the courier, who fell dead at his feet; "Euphrosine! behold thy first victim!"

With that he leaped into the saddle, and galloped away toward Janina. His guards followed him at a distance, watching his actions, while the inhabitants of the villages through which he passed fled at his approach. He pushed on without stopping or looking to right or left, foundered his horse, who fell with him on the shore of the lake, which had witnessed Euphrosine's death,

and, taking a boat there, hastened to hide his grief and rage in his seraglio.

Ali, but little concerned at wrath which spent itself in tears and shrieks, ordered Mouktar to come at once to his palace.

"He will not kill *you*," he said with a bitter smile to the bearer of this expression of his will.

In truth, the same man who was venting his rage in furious threats a moment before, was struck dumb by his father's peremptory message, and obeyed.

"Come hither, Mouktar," said Ali, giving him his murdering hand to kiss as soon as he appeared; "I propose to ignore your raving; but hereafter never forget that anyone who defies public opinion as I do fears nothing on this earth. You can go now; when your troops have rested from their fatigue, come to me for orders. Go, and remember what I say."

Mouktar withdrew, as shamefaced as if he had just been forgiven for some heinous sin. He could think of no better way to console himself than to pass the night with Veli in carousing and debauchery. But the day was soon to come when the two brothers, equally outraged by their father, would join forces to plan and execute a fearful vengeance.

Meanwhile the divan was beginning to take umbrage at the constant aggrandizement of the Pacha of Janina. Not daring to attack so formidable a vassal in front it strove to diminish his power in a roundabout way, and on the pretext that his age disqualified him to perform the arduous labors imposed upon him by too many offices the government of Thessaly was taken out of his hands. But in order to make him believe that this step was taken in no spirit of hostility to him, the vacant

post was bestowed upon his nephew Elmas Bey, son of Soliman and Chaïnitza.

The latter, who was no less ambitious than her brother, could not restrain her delight at the prospect of governing in the name of her son, who was a man of a mild and rather weak character, and was accustomed to obey her blindly. She applied to her brother for permission to go to Trikala to attend her son's installation, and to the surprise of every one obtained it. It was impossible to realize that Ali would unhesitatingly renounce so important a post as that of governor of Thessaly. However he dissembled his real feelings so cleverly that everybody was finally deceived by his air of resignation; and the air was filled with praises of his magnanimity when he himself provided a brilliant escort for his sister to the capital of the *sangiac* of which he had been deprived in favor of his nephew. He sent the latter, with congratulatory letters, a number of handsome presents; among others a superb cloak of black foxskins, which cost more than a hundred thousand francs of our money; he begged him to wear it when the sultan's envoy delivered his firman of investiture. Chaïnitza herself was the bearer of the old pacha's gifts and messages.

She reached Trikala safely, and faithfully executed the commissions with which she was entrusted. When the moment approached for the ceremony to which she had looked forward with ambitious ardor, she superintended all the preparations in person. Elmas, clad in his black fox cloak, was in her presence proclaimed and recognized as governor of Thessaly.

"My son is pacha," she cried in the intoxication of triumph, "my dear son is pacha! my nephews will die with chagrin."

But her arrogant joy was destined to be of short duration. A few days after his installation Elmas became conscious of a feeling of general debility and languor. An unconquerable inclination to sleep, convulsive sneezing, and a feverish glitter in his eyes denoted the presence of some serious disease. Ali's gift had accomplished its mission. The fur cloak, purposely impregnated with the deadly exhalations from a young woman ill with the small-pox, conveyed the poison into the veins of the new pacha, who, having never been inoculated, died within a few days.

Chaïnitza's grief, as she looked upon her dead son, vented itself in sobs and threats and imprecations; but as she did not know whom to hold responsible for the catastrophe, she made haste to leave the spot where it came upon her, and returned to Janina, to pour out her tears upon her brother's bosom. She found him so overcome with grief that she was almost inclined to pity instead of suspecting him. His feigned sympathy tended to soothe her despair, which was finally forgotten altogether beneath the caresses of her second son, Aden Bey.

Meanwhile Ali, ever mindful of his own interests, lost no time in sending one of his officers to Trikala to administer the government in the place of his deceased nephew, and easily procured his own reinstatement as pacha from the Porte, it being demonstrated that any attempt to diminish his prestige would surely bring disaster.

This last transaction aroused the suspicion of many people. But the public voice, which had begun to discuss the causes of the death of Elmas, was drowned by the roar of cannon from the summit of the fortress of Janina, announcing to all Epirus the birth of a new heir

to the pacha. It was Salik Bey, who was presented to him by a Georgian slave.

Fortune, which seemed on the watch for opportunities to reward his crimes, and gratify his desires, had in store for him a more precious gift than all her previous ones —a lovely and lovable wife to take Emineh's place and make him forget her.

The divan, when the letters-patent reinstating him in the government of Thessaly were forwarded to Ali-Pacha, took occasion to urge upon him the necessity of hunting down and exterminating a band of counterfeiters, who were operating extensively in that region. Ali, overjoyed to have an opportunity of displaying his zeal in the sultan's service, without other outlay than the trouble of shedding blood, quickly set his spies at work, and having by their means discovered the haunts of the band, made a descent upon them with a considerable force. The place was a village called Plichivitza.

He arrived during the evening, and passed the night arranging his plans so that not a man could escape; at daybreak he fell upon the counterfeiters without warning, and caught them in the act. He immediately had the leader hanged in front of his own house, and gave orders to destroy the entire population of the village.

Suddenly a young girl of marvelous beauty ran to him through the ranks of his troops, and took refuge between his knees. Ali wonderingly questioned her. She looked up into his face with innocent, frightened eyes, and kissed his hands as her tears fell fast upon them.

"My lord," she said, "I beseech you to intercede for my mother and brothers with the terrible vizier, Ali. My father is dead, alas! You can see him hanging at the door of his cabin. We have done nothing to deserve

the anger of the mighty master who put him to death. My mother is a poor woman who never offended anyone, and we are helpless children. Protect us."

Moved in spite of himself, the pacha caught the innocent child to his breast, and answered with a tearful smile:

"You appeal to the wrong man; I am the wicked vizier."

"Oh! no, no! You are too kind; you are my kind master."

"Very well, my child; have no fear, and show me your mother and brothers. I will see that they are spared; your entreaties have saved their lives."

As she was kneeling to thank him, beside herself with joy, he raised her up, and asked her name.

"Vasiliki," was her reply.

"Vasiliki! Queen! that is a good omen. Vasiliki, henceforth my palace shall be your home."

He at once placed the fortunate family whom he had consented to pardon in charge of his constable to be escorted to Janina, together with her who was to requite his kindness by a love that knew no bounds.

We shall have exhausted the list of Ali's kind deeds, when we have mentioned the capricious attack of gratitude which seized him on his return from this expedition. He was compelled by a sudden storm to call a halt in a wretched hamlet. Having asked and learned the name of the place, he seemed surprised, and stood for a moment in deep thought, as if trying to straighten out some confused recollections. Suddenly he inquired if there was not a woman named Nonza in the hamlet, and was told that there was an old woman of that name, very infirm and wretchedly poor. He ordered her to be brought before him, and she came, trembling like a leaf,

and groveled in the dust at his feet. The pacha stooped and lifted her from the ground.

"Do you know me?" he asked.

"Mercy, mighty vizier," replied the poor creature, who supposed that she was to be put to death, as she had nothing left to lose but her life.

"I see," rejoined the pacha, "that you don't recognize me whether you know me or not."

The old woman gazed stupidly at him, not understanding his words.

"Do you remember," continued Ali, "that a young man came to you one day, some forty years ago, seeking shelter from his enemies who were pursuing him? Without inquiring his name or rank, you concealed him in your humble house, dressed the wounds with which he was covered, and shared your slender store of food with him; then, when he was in fit condition to go his way, you followed him to the door to wish him a pleasant journey and good fortune. Your wishes were fulfilled, my good woman. That young man's name was Ali Tepalen. That young man was myself."

The old woman was struck dumb with amazement for an instant; then she went her way, calling down blessings upon the pacha, who bestowed upon her an annuity of fifteen thousand francs for the rest of her life.

But these good deeds were simply flashes which lighted up the dark horizon of his life for rare and brief instants. On his return to Janina he was as tyrannical as ever, and resumed his intriguing and his heartless cruelty. Not content with the vast territory which was ruled by him, he began to encroach upon the domains of the neighboring pachas on every possible occasion. Thus Phocis, Aetolia, and Acarnania were in turn

occupied by his troops, who passed most of their time in destroying the crops and decimating the people.

At the same time he deprived Ibrahim Pacha of the last of his daughters, who became the bride of his nephew, Aden Bey, son of the incestuous Chaïnitza. This new bond of union with a family which he had already humbled and despoiled so many times furnished him with new weapons against it, in case he should wish to keep the pacha's sons under surveillance, or should find it necessary to lure them into some trap.

While he was arranging his nephew's marriage, he was also providing for the advancement of his sons. Thanks to the support of the French ambassador, whom he had succeeded in convincing that he was a devoted friend of the Emperor Napoleon, he procured the appointment of Veli to the pachalik of the Morea, and Mouktar to that of Lepanto. But, as he had no other purpose in placing his children in these elevated positions than to assure and add to his own power, he himself selected their respective retinues, and gave them for lieutenants officers of his own choosing. When they started for their governments, he retained as hostages their wives and children, and even held back their movable property on the pretext that they ought not to be burdened with such things in war-time—the Porte being then openly hostile to England. He also seized this opportunity to rid himself of certain individuals who were obnoxious to him, among others one Ismaïl-Pacho Bey, who had been by turns his adversary and his tool; he appointed him secretary to his son Veli, ostensibly as a proof that he was taken into favor once more, but really in order that he might the more easily in his absence despoil him of the property of no mean amount which he owned at Janina. The secretary was not deluded,

however, and gave vent to his wrath as he was leaving the city.

"He sends me away, the villain," he cried, shaking his fist at Ali, who was sitting at a window of his palace; "he sends me away so that he can steal my property, but I'll be revenged, whatever happens; and I shall die happy, if I can cause that brigand's head to fall at the expense of my own."

At the same time that he was meeting with such success in adding to his power, Ali was trying to establish it upon an impregnable foundation. He entered into secret negotiations with the great powers of Europe one after another, with the design of securing his own independence, and being recognized as Prince of Greece. A mysterious, inexplicable incident conveyed the intelligence of this felony to the divan, and furnished material proofs thereof; letters bearing his seal fell into the hands of the ministry. Selim forthwith dispatched a *capidgi-bachi*, a sort of envoy with full powers, to Janina, to investigate the affair judicially, and proceed against the culprit.

Immediately upon his arrival that functionary produced the authentic evidence of his correspondence with the enemies of the State. Ali did not feel strong enough as yet to raise the mask, and on the other hand, in face of the documentary proof, he could not lie. He sought to gain time.

"I am guilty in his highness' eyes," he said; "the seal is mine, I cannot disown it; but the handwriting is not of either of my secretaries, and my seal must have been stolen to be affixed to these compromising papers, in order to ruin me. I beg you to grant me a few days to solve this mystery of iniquity which must compromise me in the eyes of my master and of all good Mussulmans.

May God be pleased to furnish me with the means of making my innocence clear! for I am as spotless as the sunlight, although everything bears witness against me."

After this interview Ali, while pretending to set on foot a secret inquiry, was casting about for some way to extricate himself lawfully from his embarrassment. He passed some days forming plans which he at once abandoned, but at last his resourceful genius suggested a means of relief from one of the greatest dilemmas in which he was ever involved. He sent for a Greek whom he frequently employed, and addressed him thus:

"I have always been fond of you, as you know, and the moment has come to make your fortune. From this day forth you are my son, your children shall be my children, my house shall be yours, and I ask only the slightest service at your hands as the price of all that I propose to do for you. This cursed *capidgi-bachi*, who arrived here the other day, has brought certain papers sealed with my seal, which my enemies propose to use to annoy me and extort money from me. I have already given too much, and I am determined to get out of this affair without loosening my purse-strings, unless it be for a faithful servant like yourself. I am inclined to think, therefore, my son, that it will be best for you to attend before the tribunal when I give you notice to that effect, and make oath, in presence of the *capidgi-bachi* and the cadi, that you wrote the letters attributed to me, and that you used my seal without authority in order to give them an official character."

At his words the Greek turned pale, and would have made some reply.

"What do you fear, my dear boy?" continued Ali; "tell me, am I not a kind master to you? and whom

need you fear so long as I am your protector? The *capidgi-bachi?* He has no authority here; I have had twenty such as he tossed into the lake before now, and if I must go farther to give you confidence, I swear by my own head and my son's, that no harm shall come to you from that official. So be ready to do what we have agreed, and above all things don't mention it to a single soul, so that the plan may succeed as we both wish to have it."

Influenced more by fear of the pacha, whose wrath he could not escape in case of refusal, than by his promises, the Greek undertook to bear false witness as requested. Ali, overjoyed, dismissed him with a thousand protestations of good-will, and at once summoned the *capidgi-bachi*, to whom he said with every appearance of the deepest emotion:

"I have at last unraveled the infernal plot against me; it is the work of a man in the pay of the implacable enemies of the empire—an agent of Russia. He is in my power, and I have held out hopes of pardon to him, on condition that he makes a full disclosure to the court. Be good enough, therefore, to summon the cadi, the magistrates and the chief men of the city, that they may hear the culprit's testimony, and so the truth may come to light."

The court was soon convened, and the trembling Greek came forward amid profound silence.

"Do you know this handwriting?" the cadi asked him.

"It is mine."

"And this seal?"

"It is Ali-Pacha's, my master's."

"How happens it to be affixed at the foot of these letters?"

"I put it there of my own motion, abusing the confidence of the pacha, who sometimes gave it me to sign his orders."

"Enough; you may retire."

Ali, being somewhat anxious as to the success of his scheme, had walked toward the court-room, and as he entered the courtyard the Greek, coming out, threw himself at his feet, and informed him that his wishes were complied with.

"'Tis well," said Ali, "you shall have your reward."

He turned and made a sign to his guards; they had their instructions, and threw themselves upon the Greek, drowning his remonstrances with their shouts, and hanged him on the spot.

Immediately thereafter the pacha went before the judges and asked them the result of their inquiry. They replied with an outburst of applause.

"The guilty author of the crime which was laid at my door," he said, "is no more; I have just had him hanged before I learned your decision concerning myself and him; so perish all the enemies of our glorious sultan!"

The official report of the proceedings was drawn up on the spot; and in acknowledgment of that formality, Ali, without much difficulty, prevailed upon the *capidgi-bachi* to accept a gift of fifty purses. He also purchased the favor of the principal members of the divan by sending handsome presents to them; and the sultan, harkening to the suggestions of his advisers, seemed to have given him his confidence once more.

Ali, however, was well aware that his return to favor was apparent only, and that Selim was simply feigning belief in his innocence, pending the day when he should be able to punish him without fear of consequences;

he sought, therefore, to balk him by overthrowing him, and bestirred himself to make common cause with his enemies both inside and outside the empire. A conspiracy was entered into by the agents of the malcontent pachas and the partisans of England; and one day when Ali was witnessing the shell practice of certain French gunners sent into Albania by the Governor of Illyria, a Tartar brought him the news of the deposition of Selim, and the accession of his nephew Mustapha. He leaped to his feet, transported with delight, and publicly thanked God for the good fortune that had befallen him. He had, as a matter of fact, gained by the change of sultan, but much less than he gained by the subsequent uprising which resulted in the death of Selim whom it was sought to restore to the throne, and of Mustapha, whom it was sought to dethrone. Mahmoud II., who next girded on the sceptre of Oman, attained to the supreme power at a difficult juncture, immediately after sanguinary civil dissensions, and in the midst of a general political overhauling, and he had neither the will nor the power to interfere with his most powerful vassals. He received with marked satisfaction the million which Ali made haste to send him as an earnest of his devotion at the moment of his installation; he assured him of his most distinguished consideration, and confirmed him and his sons in their offices and dignities. This fortunate change in his fortunes carried the pacha's pride and audacity to a towering height; being thereby relieved from all uneasiness he determined to put into execution at last a project which had been the dream of his whole life.

After he had made himself master of Argyrokastron, which he had long coveted, he led his victorious army against the town of Kardiki, whose people had taken

part with those of Kormovo in the outrage inflicted upon his mother and sister long before. They knew only too well that there was no hope of pardon for them, and made a gallant defence; but they were forced to yield to famine. After a month of rigorous blockade, the common people, lacking fodder for their beasts, and food for themselves, began to shriek for mercy in the streets. The leading men of the town, affected by the general discouragement, and being powerless to do anything alone, reluctantly agreed to a capitulation. Ali, whose intentions concerning the fate of the ill-fated town were unalterably fixed, acceded to whatever they asked. A treaty was signed and both sides swore upon the Koran to abide by its terms. It provided that seventy-two beys, the heads of the principal families of Albania, should repair to Janina, free and armed, and should there be received with the honors due to their rank as great feudatories of the sultan; that they and their families should not be put to death, and should continue to enjoy all their property; and that all the other inhabitants of Kardiki, being Mussulmans, and therefore Ali's brothers, should be treated by him as friends, and should retain their liberty and their property. On these conditions a portion of the town was to be given over to the occupation of the victorious troops.

As the pacha's troops, in conformity with the terms of the treaty, were taking possession of the designated quarter, one of the principal chiefs, Saleh Bey, and his wife, anticipating the fate that awaited their imprudent companions, took their own lives.

Meanwhile Ali welcomed the seventy-two beys on their arrival at Janina, with most effusive demonstrations of friendship. He gave them his palace on the lake for their quarters, and entertained them magnificently

for several days. But at the end of that time having taken away their weapons upon some specious pretext or other, he loaded them with chains and sent them to a Greek convent on an island in the middle of the lake, which was transformed into a prison. As the time to exterminate them had not arrived he took pains to justify the imprisonment of the hostages by an alleged attempt to escape.

Popular credulity was content with this explanation, and no one questioned the pacha's good faith when he announced that he proposed to go to Kardiki to establish a police system, and to give the people guarantees for the performance of the promises he had made them. Nor did it cause astonishment that he took with him a great number of soldiers, because he was accustomed to travel with a large escort.

After three days' journeying he halted at Libokovo, where his sister had dwelt since the death of her second son Aden Bey, whom she had recently lost by disease. What took place between them in the long interview that they had together is not known; but it was noticed that Chaïnitza's tears, which had flowed incessantly up to that time, stopped as if by magic, and that her women, who had not put off their mourning, received orders to resume their ordinary apparel. The holiday-making and dancing, which began at Ali's arrival, were not discontinued after his departure.

He passed the night at Chenderia, a castle situated on the summit of a cliff, whence Kardiki can be seen. The next day at dawn he sent one of his ushers to summon the Kardikiotes, women excepted, to repair to Chenderia, there to receive renewed assurances of forgiveness and friendship from the Vizier Ali-Pacha.

The Kardikiotes looked upon this summons as ominous

of a great calamity; the whole town resounded with shrieks and lamentations, and the mosques were filled with people imploring divine assistance. The hour for departure having arrived, they embraced as if they were never to meet again, and the men, six hundred and seventy in number, set out for Chenderia. At the gate of the town they were met by a troop of Albanians, who joined them, ostensibly as an escort, and whose number constantly increased as they went on.

In a short time they found themselves in Ali-Pacha's presence. He was surrounded by several thousand soldiers drawn up in imposing array. This exhibition of strength put the finishing touch to the dismay of the wretched Kardikiotes, who saw that themselves, as well as their wives and children whom they had left behind without means of defence, were completely at the mercy of an enemy who had hitherto shown himself implacable. They all prostrated themselves before the pacha, and with the fervor inspired by dread of a great danger, implored him to be generous and to forgive them.

Ali enjoyed for some time without speaking the pleasure of seeing his oldest enemies lick the dust before him; then he bade them rise, and to restore their confidence scattered broadcast among them the sacred names of brother, son, and beloved of his heart; he picked out his old acquaintances, called them to his side, and chatted with them familiarly of the days when they were young together, of their sports, and their early affections, and added, with tears in his eyes, pointing to the younger men:

"The dissensions which have kept us apart so many years have given the children, who were still unborn at the time of our separation, time to become men; I have thereby lost the pleasure of watching the growth of my

neighbors' children, and of bestowing favors upon them; but I hope shortly to do away with the effects of our unfortunate quarrel."

Thereupon he made them all many fine promises, and requested them to go down to a neighboring khan, where he proposed to set before them a sumptuous feast as a token of good-fellowship. Passing from abject terror to the keenest delight, the Kardikiotes joyously started off toward the khan, blessing Ali-Pacha, and reproaching one another for having dared to suspect his good faith.

Ali descended the cliff of Chenderia in his litter, escorted by his courtiers, who praised his clemency in fulsome phrases, to which he replied with a gracious smile. When he reached the foot of the cliff he mounted his horse, and rode toward the khan, ordering his troops to follow him. He galloped twice around it, alone and in silence; then, riding up to the door which had been closed by his order, he suddenly drew rein, and motioned to his *tchoadars*, or bodyguards, to enter the khan.

"Kill!" he cried in a voice of thunder.

The *tchoadars* were transfixed with surprise and horror; as the pacha in a rage roared out the command a second time, they indignantly threw down their arms. In vain did he harangue them, and coax and threaten; some maintained a sullen silence, while others ventured to appeal for mercy. Thereupon he ordered them to fall back, and addressed the Christian Mirdites who served under his flag:

"I now entrust to you, brave Latins," he cried, "the task of exterminating the enemies of my name. Avenge me, and I will magnificently reward the service."

There was a confused muttering in the ranks, and Ali supposed that they were deliberating as to the price they should put upon the murder.

"Speak out," he said, "I am ready to listen and satisfy you."

Thereupon the leader of the Mirdites came forward, and having raised the hood of his black frock:

"Ali-Pacha," he said, firmly, looking him full in the face, "your words are insulting to us; we are not of the kind who murder disarmed men and prisoners; give the Kardikiotes their liberty and their arms and we will fight them. We serve you as soldiers, not as executioners."

This speech was loudly applauded by the whole black battalion. Ali thought he was betrayed and gazed about uneasily and suspiciously. Terror had almost done the work of clemency, and he was on the point of pronouncing the word "pardon," when one Athanasius Vaya, a Greek Schismatic, and a favorite of the pacha, whose natural son he was said to be, came forward at the head of the army servants, and offered to carry out his wishes with their assistance. Ali applauded his zeal, gave him full authority to act in his name, and galloped to the top of a hill near by, to feast his eyes upon the massacre. The Christian Mirdites, and the Mussulman *tchoadars* joined forces and knelt to entreat divine pity for the unhappy Kirdikiotes, whose last hour had come.

The khan in which they were confined was a square, unroofed enclosure, intended as a pen for herds of buffalo. The wretched creatures, who had heard nothing of what was taking place outside, were amazed beyond measure when Athanasius Vaya and his followers appeared on top of the walls. But their uncertainty was of short duration. At the signal given by Ali by discharging a carbine, the slaughter began. Horrible shrieks arose in the enclosure; the terror-stricken prisoners, riddled with bullets, threw themselves upon one another in frenzied

attempts to escape mortal wounds. Some ran about like insane men in the issueless, unsheltered enclosure, until they too were struck down; others tried to scale the walls, either to escape, or to avenge themselves by grappling with their murderers; but they soon were beaten back with scimetars or musket-butts. Despair and death were everywhere.

After an hour of unremitting slaughter, a deathly silence fell upon the khan; within were naught but corpses. Ali forbade their burial under pain of death. He caused an inscription to be placed in letters of gold over the gate, to apprise future generations that six hundred Kardikiotes had been sacrificed on that spot to the shades of his mother, Kamco.

When the shrieks had died away in the khan, they began in the town. The assassins repaired thither, scattered among the houses, and after dishonoring the women, brought them together in a flock to be driven to Libokovo. A ghastly journey! At every halt new miscreants pounced upon the helpless victims, and took their turn at cruelty and outrage.

At last they reached their destination, where Chaïnitza awaited them, triumphant and implacable. As after the taking of Kormovo, she forced the women to cut off their own hair, and stuff a mattress with it for her to lie upon. Then she caused them to be stripped naked, and described to them in most minute detail, and with transports of joy, the massacre of their fathers and husbands and brothers and sons. When she had feasted to satiety upon their anguish, she turned them over to the tender mercies of her soldiers, whose brutality she encouraged by word and gesture. She put an end to the scene by disemboweling one poor creature with a razor guided by her own hand.

She ordered proclamation to be made with sound of trumpet throughout the town, that all persons were forbidden to furnish lodging or clothes or food to the women and children of Kardiki, condemned to wander naked through the forests, until they should die of hunger, or be devoured by wild beasts.

The seventy-two hostages at Janina were all put to death on Ali's return from his expedition. His vengeance was complete.

But while, his heart overflowing with a fearful joy, he was enjoying the repose of the gorged tiger, a threatening voice assailed him in the bosom of his palace. The sheik Jousouf, commandant of the fortress of Janina, whose exemplary piety caused him to be looked upon as a saint by the Mussulmans, and whose kindness of heart and virtuous life commanded universal affection and respect, paid his first visit to the pacha's gorgeous abode. At sight of him the guards were struck dumb; soon the most devout threw themselves at his feet, while others ran to warn Ali of his coming. But no one dreamed of stopping the old man, who walked on with slow and measured tread through the excited seraglio. No waiting in antechambers, no delay for him; scorning the customary formalities of etiquette he passed unattended by an usher through all the apartments until he came to Ali's own.

The pacha, whose impiety did not prevent him from being superstitious, was terror-stricken. He rose hastily from his sofa, and went forward to meet the saintly sheik, who was followed by a throng of courtiers in silent awe. He approached him with outward manifestations of the most profound respect, and even went so far as to take his right hand to kiss; but Jousouf quickly drew it back and thrust it into the folds of his cloak, and with his other hand motioned to him to be

seated. The pacha mechanically obeyed, and waited sullenly until it should please the anchorite to disclose the purpose of his visit.

Jousouf, after enjoining upon him to pay the closest attention to what he was about to hear, began to rebuke him for his injustice, his rapine, his perfidy and his cruelty, so forcibly and so eloquently, that the whole assemblage was moved to tears. Ali alone, although abashed, preserved his tranquillity; but when the sheik referred to Emineh's death, and accused him of having caused it, he sprang from his seat with pallid cheeks, and cried in deadly terror:

"O my father! what name is that? Pray for me! or at least do not hurl me into the abyss by your curse."

"I have no need to curse you," replied Jousouf; "your crimes cry out sufficiently against you. God has heard their voice, and soon will summon you to appear before Him, that He may sit in judgment on you, and sentence you to everlasting punishment. Tremble! your hour is coming—it is coming, it is near at hand!"

With a glance of terrible meaning at the pacha, he left the room without another word. Ali, terrified beyond expression, placed a thousand pieces of gold in a white satin purse, and, running after the sheik, offered them to him, and implored him to withdraw his threats. But he went his way without replying, and as he went forth from the palace shook its dust from his shoes against the wall.

Ali returned to his apartment, with a gloomy, distracted air, and did not recover from the effect produced by this scene for several days. But he soon manifested more shame because he had allowed himself to remain inactive for a brief moment, than because of the rebuke

he had listened to, and he seized the first opportunity to resume his ordinary mode of life.

The opportunity arose in connection with the marriage of Moustaï, Pacha of Scutori, with the oldest daughter of Veli Pacha, called the Princess of Aulis, because her dowry consisted of entire villages in that province. Immediately after the publication of this marriage, Ali gave the signal for the beginning of a series of saturnalian orgies, the preparations for which he conducted with the same mystery in which he shrouded his schemes of massacre.

It seemed as if the scum of the whole earth had been floated into Janina by a sudden rising of the waters. The people, seeking to drown the remembrance of their woeful plight, plunged into drunkenness and strove to find pleasure therein. Disorderly bands of jugglers from Roumelia infested the streets and bazaars and public squares; the roads were filled with great flocks of sheep with scarlet-dyed wool, and rams with gilded horns, on their way to the court of the vizier. Bishops, abbots and all the church dignitaries were forced to get tipsy and dance in the most absurd fashion, for Ali believed that he heightened his own importance by humiliating the most venerable and most highly respected of his contemporaries.

Day and night the bacchanalian routs succeeded one another with increasing energy; fireworks, singing, shouting, the blare of trumpets, and the roaring of wild beasts in the arena were inextricably mingled in the air; enormous spits, laden with meat, smoked before huge fires, while the wine flowed in rivers at the tables spread in the courtyards of the palace. Parties of brutal soldiers dragged the mechanics from their work, and compelled them with blows to disport themselves for their

amusement. Filthy, foul-tongued gypsies invaded private houses, and on the pretext that they were ordered by the vizier to entertain the occupants, coolly made off with everything they could lay their hands on.

Ali was overjoyed at the spectacle of the whole population wallowing like brutes in this slough of debauchery, especially as his greed found its account therein; for every participant was required to deposit at the palace gate a gift proportioned to his means, and four satellites were employed in making sure that no one overlooked that obligation.

At last, on the nineteenth day, Ali determined to put the finishing touch to the festival by an orgy worthy of him. He caused the galleries and reception rooms of his castle on the lake to be decorated with inconceivable magnificence. Fifteen hundred guests were bid to a sumptuous banquet there. The pacha appeared in all his glory, surrounded by his noble slaves, as courtiers are called in the East, and, taking his seat upon a platform overlooking the degraded herd, whom his lightest glance struck dumb, he gave the signal for the games to begin. At the sound of his voice, vice began her most shameless antics, and immodesty shook her wine-soaked wings over the guests. Every tongue was loosened, the fever flew to every brain, and every evil passion came forth in all its nakedness; but suddenly the uproar ceased, and the guests crowded together in affright. At the door of the banqueting-room stood a man, with pallid cheeks, and haggard eyes, his garments torn and blood-stained. As everyone fell back as he advanced, he easily made his way to the vizier's side, and, kneeling at his feet, handed him a dispatch. Ali opened it, and ran his eyes rapidly over it; his lips trembled, his eyebrows came together, and the muscles of his brow

contracted in a manner frightful to see. He tried in vain to smile and appear unconcerned; his agitation gave him the lie, and he was compelled to withdraw, after he had caused a herald to announce that the entertainment was not to be interrupted.

Now let us see what was the explanation of the message, and of the effect it produced.

Ali had long cherished a violent passion for Zobeïde, his son Veli Pacha's wife, and after the latter's departure he tried to gratify it. Being repelled with indignant scorn, he had recourse to stratagem, and administered a soporific draught to his daughter-in-law, which left her at his mercy. Poor Zobeïde knew nothing of the outrage practiced upon her until she found herself upon the point of becoming a mother, when certain half-confidences on the part of her women, whom the vizier had compelled under fear of death to become his accomplices, and some vague recollection of her own left no doubt in her mind that she bore in her womb the fruit of incest. Having no one to whom to turn in her despair, she wrote to the author of her shame, imploring him to come at once to the harem. He alone could enter there; for, in the capacity of head of the family, he had the right to visit and keep an eye upon his sons' wives, the law-making power having failed to conceive the possibility of criminality between a father and his children. As soon as Ali appeared Zobeïde threw herself at his feet, unable to utter a word, so overwhelmed with grief was she. The pacha confessed his crime, alleging the violence of his passion as an excuse, mingled his tears with his victim's, and implored her to be calm and say nothing, promising to make away with the offspring of his villainy. Zobeïde's entreaties and sobs were equally unavailing to induce him to abandon the

idea of removing the traces of his former crime by another more horrible one.

But the secret had already been divulged, and Pacho Bey, who had spies at Janina, had learned the story in all its details. Only too happy to gratify his spite against the father, he revealed the whole affair to the son. Veli Pacha, mad with rage, swore to be revenged, and requested Pacho Bey's assistance, which he readily promised. But Ali was warned in time, and he was not the man to allow himself to be caught napping. Pacho Bey, whom Veli had raised to the position of sword-bearer, was set upon in broad daylight by six bravoes sent from Janina, but help came in time; five of the assassins, taken in the fact, were hanged without further ceremony on the public square; the sixth was he who handed the vizier the dispatch containing the intelligence of the miscarriage of the plot.

As Ali was deliberating upon the means of allaying the storm provoked by this affair, he was advised that the ambassador sent by Moustaï, Pacha of Scutari, to receive the spouse who was to reign in his harem, had arrived without the walls of Janina. It was Jousouf, Bey of Debres, an old foe of Ali. He was encamped with eight hundred horsemen at the foot of the Tomoros of Dordona, and he was so fearful that some snare would be laid for him that the most persistent urging was of no avail to induce him to put his foot within the walls. Ali saw at last that it was useless to urge him further, and that the moment to rid himself of his foe had not yet arrived, so he hastened the departure of his grand-daughter, the Princess of Aulis.

That being off his mind, he devoted himself exclusively to the task of bringing his ghastly family trouble to a conclusion. He began by putting out of the

way those women employed about the harem, whom he had been compelled to take into his confidence; they were sewn up in bags, by the gypsies, and thrown into the lake. That being successfully accomplished he himself led the executors of his will into the castle vaults to receive their reward which consisted in having their heads cut off by dumb negroes. Next, and without loss of time, he introduced a physician into Zobeïde's apartments, who caused her to miscarry, and was set upon and strangled when he left the palace by the same mutes who beheaded the gypsies. Having thus removed all those who were in a position to convict him of incest, he wrote to his son Veli that he had his permission to send for his wife, as well as two of his children, whom he had detained as hostages, and that Zobeïde's innocence would put to shame the infamous slanderer, who had dared to make the most outrageous of accusations against him.

When this letter reached its destination, Pacho Bey, who was equally distrustful of the father's treachery and the son's weakness, and was content to have sown the seeds of discord in his enemy's family, took flight. Ali was furious when he was informed of his flight, and swore that his vengeance should follow him until it overtook him, though it were at the other end of the world. Meanwhile he fell back upon Jousouf, Bey of Debres, whom he was deeply chagrined to have missed at the time of his recent mission to Janina. As he was a man to be feared, both because of his courage and his great influence, Ali dared not attack him openly, so he tried to compass his assassination. It was no simple matter, for men of mark, being constantly exposed to such attacks, were always on their guard. Steel and

poison were played out, and some new method must be found. Ali found it.

Janina swarmed with adventurers; one of them succeeded in gaining access to the pacha, and offered to sell him the secret of a powder, three grains of which were sufficient to blow a man to pieces with a terrible explosion. It was nothing more nor less than detonating powder. Ali could scarcely conceal his delight at this communication, but he replied that he preferred to test it before purchasing.

In the vaults of the castle on the lake a poor monk of the order of Saint-Basil, who had manfully refused to take part in a simoniacal transaction proposed by Ali, was breathing his last. He was brought forth to experiment upon, and the experiment was most successful. The monk's limbs were burned and torn asunder to Ali's perfect satisfaction; he at once concluded the bargain, and hastened to make the most of it. He drew up a supposititious firman, which he enclosed and sealed in a cylindrical case, in accordance with custom, and sent to Jousouf-Bey by a Greek who had no suspicion of the object of his mission. Jousouf opened it unsuspectingly; his arm was blown off by the explosion, and he died from the effects of the wound, after he had written to Moustaï, Pacha of Scutari, to inform him of his fate, and urge him to be on his guard.

Jousouf's letter was handed to Moustaï simultaneously with the arrival of a similar infernal machine, sent under cover to his young wife. The package was opened and examined with due precaution, and was found to contain the elements of murder. Moustaï's mother, a jealous, cruel woman, accused her daughter-in-law, and soon the vitals of the unfortunate Aisché were consumed by a violent poison, although she was

only the innocent, unwitting instrument of her perfidious grandfather. She was *enceinte* at the time.

Fortune, which turned aside Ali's blow at Moustaï Pacha, soon consoled him with an opportunity to invade the territory of Parga, the only part of Epirus, which had thus far escaped his domination, and which he greedily coveted. Agia, a Christian township on the seashore, after rising in revolt against him, had cast in her lot with Parga, and he seized upon that fact as a pretext for beginning hostilities. His troops, under the command of his oldest son, Mouktar, first took possession of Agia, where they found none but a few old men to butcher, and marched thence to Parga, where the rebels had taken shelter. After some skirmishes between outposts, they forced their way into the city, where the inhabitants, notwithstanding their gallant defence, would inevitably have succumbed if left to themselves. But the French, under whose protection Parga had voluntarily placed itself, had a garrison in the acropolis. Our grenadiers rushed out to the assistance of the Greeks, and charged the Turks so fiercely that after a moment of fighting they fled in all directions, leaving on the field four bim-bachis, or commanders of a thousand men, and a considerable number of dead and wounded.

The pacha's naval force had little better luck than his army; it sailed out of the Gulf of Ambracia, and undertook to make the carnage more complete by cutting off the Pargans from retreating by sea; for it was Ali's purpose that all the inhabitants above the age of twelve should be put to the sword. But the squadron was dispersed by a volley or two from a small fort. A vessel manned by Paxinotes went in pursuit of the fugitives, and a gunshot fired from her deck killed the

vizier's admiral, Athanasius Macrys, a Greek from Galaxidi.

Ali was at Prevesa, anxiously awaiting news. A courier, dispatched at the beginning of the action, brought him some oranges gathered in the orchards of Parga. Ali gave him a purse filled with gold and ordered his criers to proclaim the success of his arms. His joy was increased tenfold at the appearance of a second messenger, who presented him with the heads of two Frenchmen, and informed him that his troops had forced their way into the streets of the lower town of Parga. He waited to hear no more, but ordered everybody to horse, leaped into his calash, and led a triumphal march along the Roman road leading to Nicopolis. He was dispatching courier after courier to his generals, ordering them to spare the women and girls of Parga, whom he destined for his harem, and above all to let nothing turn them aside from their search for booty, when a third Tartar informed him, near the arena at Nicopolis, that his army was routed. The vizier was overcome with confusion, his face fell, and he could hardly find strength to give the order to return to Prevesa. When he reached his palace he abandoned himself, without concealment, to such violent transports of fury, that everybody trembled with fear. He continually asked if it was really true that his troops were defeated.

"May your ill-fortune fall upon us!" his pages replied, prostrating themselves before him.

Suddenly he looked out upon the sea which lay calm and blue under his windows, and saw his little fleet doubling the point of Pancrator, and steering into the Gulf of Ambracia under full sail. The vessels dropped anchor just below the seraglio; the flag-ship was hailed,

and the death of Athanasius Macrys was announced to the vizier through the speaking-trumpet.

"But Parga? Parga?" shouted Ali.

"May Allah grant your Highness length of days! The Pargans have eluded your blows."

"It is destiny!" muttered the vizier, and his head dropped upon his breast.

As his arms had failed to effect his purpose, Ali resorted, as always, to treachery and cunning; but on this occasion, instead of seeking to corrupt his adversaries with gold he sought to weaken them by division.

The French commander, Nicole, surnamed Le Pelerin (the Pilgrim), because of a journey he once made to Mecca, had passed about six months at Janina with a detachment of cannoneers, whom General Marmont, commanding the Illyrian provinces, had temporarily placed at Ali's disposal. The old officer succeeded in acquiring the pacha's esteem and good-will, and often amused his leisure moments with tales of his campaigns and adventures of every description; and although he had not seen him for a long while, he was supposed to be still friendly to him. The vizier based his scheme upon these data. He wrote a letter to Colonel Nicole, as if in continuation of a long established correspondence between them; he thanked the colonel for having preserved his affection for him, and made a powerful appeal to him to place Parga in his hands, promising, as an inducement, to leave him in command there during his life. The second step was to see to it that this letter fell into the hands of the leading men of Parga, who plunged headlong into the trap. Inasmuch as the tone of the letter accorded perfectly with their governor's former relations with the pacha, they did not doubt his treachery.

But the result was very different from Ali's anticipations. The Pargans resumed the negotiations formerly entered into with the English, preferring to resign their liberty into the hands of a Christian people than to fall under the domination of a Mussulman satrap. The English at once sent a flag of truce to Colonel Nicole to summon him to surrender the place on honorable conditions. The colonel returned a formal refusal, and threatened to blow up the magazine, if the inhabitants, whose intentions he had fathomed, should dare to make the least hostile demonstration. Nevertheless, a few days later, the citadel was taken at night through the treachery of a woman who was employed there, and who admitted an English detachment. The next morning everyone was amazed to see the English flag waving over the acropolis of Parga.

Meanwhile all Greece, trembling as it caught a glimpse of the dawn of liberty, was shaken to its centre. The Bourbons were re-established in France, and the Greeks built numberless hopes upon an event which changed all the bases of European politics. They counted especially upon powerful assistance from Russia. But England was already beginning to take offence at anything that tended to extend the boundaries or increase the influence of that power. She was especially determined that the Ottoman Empire should maintain its integrity, and that the Greek navy, which was beginning to become formidable, must be destroyed. With this object in view, her agents approached Ali-Pacha. He was still smarting under the sting of his recent disappointment, and for all the overtures that were made to him, he had but the one reply:

"Parga, I must have Parga!"

It was necessary to give him what he wanted.

Relying upon the word of General Campbell, who, when they placed themselves under his protection, promised that they should share the lot of the seven Ionian islands, the Pargans were blissfully and gratefully enjoying the repose which is so sweet after a tempest, when a letter from the Lord High Commissioner, addressed to Lieutenant-Colonel de Bosset, undeceived them, and showed them the disaster that was soon to fall upon their devoted city.

On March 23, 1817, the British Minister Plenipotentiary at Constantinople, notwithstanding the solemn promise given the Pargans, when they placed themselves in the hands of the British troops, that they should in all respects and for all time share the lot of the Ionian islands, signed a treaty which stipulated that Parga and its outlying territory should be ceded absolutely and with full sovereignty to the Ottoman Porte. Soon after, Sir John Cartwright, English consul at Patras, arrived at Janina to arrange for the sale of the property of the Pargans, and to settle the conditions of their emigration.

Never before had European diplomacy, accustomed hitherto to look upon the encroachments of the Turks as so many acts of sacrilege, been dishonored by such a transaction. But Ali-Pacha had cast a glamour over the English agents: he loaded them down with honors and fêtes and friendly demonstrations, and yet he set spies to watch their every act; he intercepted their correspondence, and tried to arouse the Pargans against them by the insinuations of his agents. The Pargans made a great outcry; in the face of the Christian world, deaf to their complaints, and in the name of their ancestors, they demanded their rights, and that the guaranty that was given them be enforced.

"Our property is being bought," they said, "but do we

wish to sell it? and even if we were to receive its value, would gold give us back our fatherland, and the tombs of our forefathers?"

Meanwhile the Lord High Commissioner of Great Britain, Sir Thomas Maitland, was invited to a conference at Prevesa by Ali-Pacha, who complained of the exorbitant figure, five hundred thousand pounds sterling, at which the commissioners had set the value of Parga and its territory, exclusive of the personal property of the churches and of private citizens. They had thought to discourage the avaricious pacha with this high price; but Ali was not easily discouraged. He gave the Lord High Commissioner a complimentary banquet, which degenerated into a mad debauch. In the effusive friendliness of intoxication the Turk and the Briton disposed of the sacred territory of Parga. It was agreed that a new valuation should be made by experts selected by the English and the Turks. The result of this transaction was that the sum awarded to the Christians as indemnity was reduced by the English experts from the five hundred thousand pounds sterling fixed by the first appraisers to two hundred and seventy-six thousand and seventy-five pounds sterling. As Ali's agents in their independent report recommended the payment of but fifty-six thousand seven hundred and fifty pounds, a final conference took place at Buthrotum between Ali-Pacha and the Honorable Lord High Commissioner. The latter, when the conference was concluded, sent word to the Pargans that the indemnity which he condescended to award them was irrevocably fixed at one hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling. Shame upon the selfish, venal nation which suffered a whole people's lives and liberty to be thus trifled with! everlasting shame upon England!

The Pargans could not at first credit such infamy on the part of their protectors, nor realize their own sad plight. But doubt on either point became impossible when they were informed by a proclamation from the Lord High Commissioner that the pacha's army was on the march to take possession of their territory, which they were required to abandon forever on the tenth of the current month of May.

The fields were in full bearing. Amid level tracts covered with rich harvests stood eighty-one thousand olive-trees, which alone were worth two hundred thousand guineas. The sun shone brightly in the pure blue sky, and the air was fragrant with the perfume of orange and citron and lemon-trees. But it seemed as if this smiling country was inhabited by none but ghosts; naught could be seen but hands raised imploringly to heaven, and heads prostrate in the dust. Wretched people! even the dust was theirs no longer; they were forbidden to pluck a fruit or a flower; the priests were forbidden to take away the relics, and the images of the saints; the consecrated vestments, torches, candles, and the blessed pyx had become, by the treaty, the property of Mohammedans! The English had sold everything, even God Himself! And two days hence they must depart. Every man silently marked with a red cross the door of his dwelling which was soon to give shelter to an enemy.

Suddenly a terrible cry arose and echoed through the streets. They had spied the Turks upon the high land outside the town. The whole population, mad with terror and despair, knelt before the image of the Virgin of Parga, the ancient safeguard of their acropolis. A mysterious voice, issuing from within the sanctuary, reminded them that the English in their iniquitous

treaty had forgotten to sell the remains of those who were fortunate enough to die in time to escape witnessing the fall of Parga. On the instant they rushed to the cemeteries, the tombs were thrown open, and the bones and half-decayed bodies brought forth. The olive-trees fell one after another, until a huge funeral pyre towered high in air; it was set on fire; men's minds were in a frenzy of excitement, and the orders of the English functionary were disregarded. Standing, dagger in hand, in the lurid glare of the flames which were devouring the bones of their fathers, the Pargans swore a solemn oath to kill their wives and children and one another to the last man if the infidels were allowed to enter the city before the appointed hour. With a sudden inspiration born of this sublime outburst of despair, Xenocles, the last of the Greek poets, like Jeremiah upon the ruins of Jerusalem, improvised a hymn, which depicted the bitter grief of the exiles; their sobbing made his voice inaudible at times.

Meanwhile a messenger was hastily dispatched to advise the Lord High Commissioner of the Pargan's terrible resolution. He set out at once, accompanied by General Frederick Adams, and landed in Parga by the light of the flames. They were received with ill-restrained indignation, and were informed that the sacrifice would be consummated within the hour if they did not succeed in delaying the entry of Ali's troops. The general tried to console the poor wretches and to instil a little hope into their hearts; then he bent his steps toward the outposts. In the streets which he passed through amid deathly silence, he found men fully armed at the doors of their houses, awaiting the signal to put their families to death and then turn their weapons against the English. He conjured them to be patient. Their only reply

was to point out that the pacha's army was advancing. He at last reached the vanguard, and a conference ensued. The Mohammedans, who were no less disturbed than the English garrison, agreed to wait until the stipulated time.

The following day passed in death-like tranquillity. Still another day passed; at sunset on the ninth of May, 1819, the English flag disappeared from the donjons of Parga, and the Christians, after a night spent in prayer and weeping, announced their readiness to depart.

They left their dwellings at the first streak of dawn, and scattered along the shore, busily getting together a few relics of their native land. Some filled bags with the ashes of their fathers which they took from the flames; others carried away handfuls of earth, while the women and children gathered pebbles, hid them in their clothing, and laid them against their hearts, lest they should be taken from them. Meanwhile the vessels provided for their transportation were drawing near. The English soldiers watched their embarkation, which the Turks greeted from afar with fierce shouts.

The Pargans arrived at Corfu, where they were treated with shocking injustice. The price of their property was reduced again and again on various pretexts, and their abject poverty constrained them at last to accept the trifle that they chose to give them. Thus was consummated one of the most odious transactions that modern history has had to record in its pages.

The Satrap of Janina had attained the goal of his desires. He was at liberty to withdraw to his enchanted castle on the lake, and bury himself in debauchery at his leisure. But seventy-eight years had passed over his head, and old age was beginning to make its presence known to him by the infirmities it brings with it. He

dreamed dreams of blood. In vain did he fly for refuge to magnificent apartments, decorated with arabesques, adorned with superb weapons, and hung with the richest of Oriental tapestries; remorse relentlessly pursued him. Amid the gorgeous spectacle which was constantly spread out before his eyes, he saw the pallid phantom of Emineh, leading a long procession of his victims to confront him. At such times he would hide his face in his hands, and shriek desperately for help. Sometimes, ashamed of his insane terror, he would try to defy at once the rebukes of his own conscience and the opinion of the multitude, and would parade his crimes in broad daylight. If he chanced to hear a minstrel in the street singing one of the satirical ballads, which the Greeks, true to the mocking, poetic genius of their ancestors, composed against him, he would order him brought before him, make him repeat his song, applaud, it, and describe to him others of his cruel exploits.

"Come," he would say, "make a song about that, too! let the people know what I am capable of, and convince them that I stop at nothing to crush my foes! If I have anything to reproach myself for, it is the evil I can't do them."

At other times he would be overcome with dread of the life to come. He could not let his mind rest upon the thought of eternity that he did not see fearful spectres. He shuddered at the name of Alsirat, the bridge as slender as a spider's web suspended above the flames of hell, and over which all Mussulmans must pass to reach the gate of Paradise. He ceased to take Eblis (the devil) for the subject of his jokes, and insensibly became profoundly superstitious. He surrounded himself with soothsayers and *illuminati;* he consulted omens, and applied to the dervishes for

cabalistic devices, which he caused to be sewn into his clothing, or hung in the inmost recesses of his palace to keep off the malevolent spirits. A Koran was hung around his neck to ward off the evil eye. Often he withdrew to his own apartment, and knelt before it, as Louis XI. used to kneel before the lead figures on his hat. He imported from Venice a complete laboratory, and alchemists to compound the water of immortality, by means of which he proposed to fly away to the planets and find the philosopher's stone; but when he failed to secure the desired results he ordered the laboratory burned, and the alchemists hanged.

Ali hated mankind. He would have been glad to know that no one would survive him, and especially regretted his inability to massacre all those who in his judgment were likely to rejoice at his death.

He made the most of what time still remained to him to do all the evil that he could. From no other motive than his hatred, he ordered the arrest of Ibrahim Pacha, whom he had already injured so deeply, together with his son, and imprisoned them both in a dungeon constructed under the grand staircase of the castle on the lake for the express purpose of giving him the satisfaction of walking over their heads whenever he ascended to his apartments, or came down from them.

He was incessantly inventing new varieties of torture. It was not enough for him to put to death those who were obnoxious to him, but he must needs vary the manner of death, so that he might enjoy the spectacle of suffering of an unfamiliar sort. Sometimes it was a servant, guilty of nothing more than being absent a few days without leave, whom he caused to be made fast to a gallows, and put to death under his sister's eyes by means of a cannon planted within six paces and loaded

with powder only, in order to prolong his agony. Sometimes a Christian, accused of having formed a plot to blow up Janina by introducing mice with a piece of lighted slow match fastened to their tails into the powder magazine, would be thrown into the cage with his favorite tiger to be devoured.

He despised men, too, as much as he hated them. He once made this reply to a European who reproached him for the cruelty with which he treated his subjects:

"You know nothing about the people I have to deal with. While a criminal is being hanged to the branch of a tree, his brother is stealing among the crowd who have gathered at the foot of the same tree. If I cause an old man to be burned, his son steals the ashes to sell them. The *canaille* can be governed only by fear, and I am the only man that can frighten them."

His conduct was perfectly consistent with his ideas. On a certain holiday two gypsies sacrificed themselves to avert the pacha's evil destiny, and, solemnly invoking upon their own heads all the calamities which might be in store for him, leaped from the roof of the palace to the ground. One of them rose with great difficulty, giddy and sick; the other lay upon the pavement with his leg broken. Ali, having given each of them forty francs and a ration of two pounds of maize a day for life, thought that he had acquitted himself of all obligation to them, and went his way without further thought of the matter.

Every year at the feast of Ramazan a considerable sum was by his order distributed in charity among the poor women of every religion. But he found a way to transform this benevolent act into a barbarous amusement.

In the first place, as there were several palaces at Janina at long distances from one another, he would

select one for the distribution; and when the women had waited there for an hour or two, exposed to the burning sun, or the rain, or frost, according to the season and the weather, they would be informed that the distribution would certainly take place at another palace at the other extremity of the city. There they were required to wait the same length of time as before, only too happy if they were not sent to a third palace. When the hour for the distribution at last arrived, an *icoglan*, followed by half a score of Albanian soldiers armed with clubs, would come out with a bag filled with money, and throw it by the handful into the midst of the crowd. Thereupon a frightful uproar would ensue; the women would rush upon it in a body, throwing one another down, fighting and tearing, and shrieking with wrath and pain. Immediately the Albanians, ostensibly to reestablish order, would dart into the middle of the tumult, and strike right and left with their clubs. Meanwhile the pacha would be sitting at his window, gazing delightedly at the degrading spectacle, and applauding impartially all the well-aimed blows by whomsoever delivered. In the course of this distribution, which enriched no one, there were always many women wounded, and more than once death resulted from the blows they received.

He had carriages for himself and his family, but allowed no one else to enjoy that privilege. To avoid being jolted he adopted the simple expedient of removing the pavements from the streets of Janina and the neighboring towns, so that the unhappy foot-passenger was fairly stifled with dust, and in winter could hardly drag himself along through the mud. It delighted him to see the public begrimed with dirt, and one day, as he was going out to drive in a heavy rain, he said to the officers who were to accompany him:

"How pleasant it is to be able to ride in a carriage while you fellows follow on horseback! You will get wet and dirty while I smoke my pipe and laugh at your discomfort."

He could not understand how the kings of Europe could allow their subjects to enjoy the same conveniences and the same amusements as themselves.

"If I had a theatre," he would say, "I wouldn't allow anyone but my children to go inside it; but these Christian beasts don't know how to uphold their dignity."

He enjoyed nothing more than mystifying everyone who had dealings with him. One day he began to talk Turkish to a Maltese merchant who was showing him some jewels. He was informed that the merchant could understand only Italian or Greek, but he continued nevertheless in Turkish, and would not permit anyone to translate his words into Greek. At last the Maltese lost patience, closed his cases, and took them away. Ali watched him with perfect tranquillity, and as he was going out of the room told him, still in Turkish, to return the next day.

Meanwhile an unexpected event, a warning from destiny, cast the shadow of impending evil upon the pacha's future. "Misfortunes travel in flocks," forcibly says a Turkish proverb: this was the first of Ali's flock.

One morning he was rudely awakened by the Sheik Jousouf, who had made his way to his apartment despite his guards.

"Look you," he said, handing him a letter; "God, who chastises the wicked, has decreed that your seraglio at Tepalen should be burned; yes, your sumptuous abode, your handsome furniture, your elegant hangings,

your cashmeres, your furs, your weapons, everything is destroyed! and your youngest son, your best-beloved son, Selik Pacha himself, set the match to it!"

And the sheik rushed from the room, shouting triumphantly:

"Fire! fire! fire!"

Ali mounted at once and rode to Tepalen without drawing rein, followed by his guards. As soon as he reached the spot where his palace had insulted the public misery, his first step was to visit the underground vaults where his treasures were concealed. He found everything intact, silver plate, and jewels, as well as fifty millions of francs in gold, hidden in a well over which he had built a great tower. When this inspection was concluded he ordered all the ashes to be put through a sifter, in order to secure the gold from the fringes of the sofas, and the silver ornaments of the weapons. He then put forth a proclamation throughout his dominions, wherein, after stating that he had been deprived of his mansion by the hand of God, and was left with no property in his native place, he invited all those who loved him to manifest their affection by assisting him in proportion thereto. He fixed a day for the reception of offerings from each commune, and from each individual above the common herd, according to their respective distances from Tepalen, where all these proofs of devotion were to be delivered.

For five days Ali-Pacha received the forced alms which were brought to him from all parts. Sitting at the outer gate of his burned palace, upon a wretched mat of palm leaves, and clothed in rags, he held in his left hand a cheap pipe, like those used by the common people, from which he took an occasional whiff, and in the right an old red cap which he held out to the

passers-by, asking alms. Behind him stood a Jew of Janina, whose duty it was to test the gold pieces and appraise the jewels which were brought in lieu of cash; for everyone, under the influence of fear, sought to appear generous. Ali neglected no means of swelling his receipts; for instance he caused large sums to be secretly handed to poor, obscure persons, servants, workingmen, soldiers, who, when they gave the money back to him in public would seem to be making great sacrifices for him, and thus the rich people and those in high position, who could not consistently with their dignity offer the pacha the same amount as their inferiors, felt compelled to make him enormous presents.

After this alms-giving with knives at their throats the people thought that they were rid of the pacha. But they were soon informed by an ordinance published throughout Albania that they were expected to rebuild and furnish the redoubtable seraglio of Tepalen at their own expense. Ali then returned to Janina with his treasure and a small number of women who had escaped the flames; these latter he sold to his intimate friends, alleging that he was no longer rich enough to keep so many slaves.

Destiny soon afforded him a fresh opportunity to enrich himself. Arta, an opulent Christian city, was ravaged by the plague. Out of eight thousand inhabitants seven thousand died. When he heard the news Ali at once dispatched commissioners to prepare an inventory of their real and personal property, which he laid claim to as universal heir of all his subjects. In the streets of Arta a few emaciated, livid spectres were still dragging themselves about. In order to make the inventory as thorough as possible, these poor wretches were compelled to wash the mattress covers, the sheets

and linen, still impregnated with the germs of contagion, in the river Inachus.

While that was being done the pacha's inquisitors were hunting everywhere for the gold, which was supposed to be hidden away. They searched the tree-trunks, pulled down the walls, investigated the darkest corners, and laid aside with great care a skeleton, around which they found a belt filled with Venetian sequins. All the archons of the city were arrested and put to the question, with the purpose of forcing them to disclose the whereabouts of the hidden treasures, all traces of which death had removed with their owners. One magistrate, who was accused of having put out of sight some articles of trifling value, was plunged up to the shoulders in a kettle filled with melted lead and boiling oil. Old men, women and children, rich and poor, were questioned, beaten with clubs, and forced to purchase life by giving up the last vestiges of their property.

When the handful of people left in the city were thus decimated, they began to think about peopling it once more. With this end in view Ali's agents went from village to village throughout Thessaly, and drove every one they met to Arta like a flock of sheep. The ill-starred colonists, thus compelled to settle in the city, were compelled further to find cash with which to pay the vizier for the houses in which they were compelled to live.

This affair concluded, Ali turned his attention to another which he had long had at heart. We have seen how Ismaël Pacho Bey escaped the bravoes who were sent to murder him. A vessel left Prevesa secretly and sailed to his place of retreat. On his arrival, the captain, representing himself to be a trader, invited Ismaël

on board to inspect his cargo. But he took alarm at some suspicious circumstances and fled, and for some time he could not be found. In revenge Ali turned his wife out of the palace at Janina in which she had continued to live, and relegated her to a wretched cabin, where she was obliged to spin for a livelihood.

But he did not rest there; having learned after some little time that Pacho Bey had taken refuge with the Nazir of Drama, whose favorite he had become, he determined to deal him a final blow, more terrible and more certain to accomplish its end than his previous ones. But Ismaël's lucky star saved him once again from his enemy's machinations. While he was hunting he was approached by a *capidgi-bachi*, who begged him to tell him where the nazir was, as he had an important communication for him. As *capidgi-bachis* are often the bearers of bad news which it is important to know at once, and the nazir was some distance away, Pacho Bey said that he was the nazir.

The confiding envoy of the sultan thereupon informed him that he was the bearer of a firman issued at the request of Ali, Pacha of Janina.

"Of Tepalen? He is my friend. How can I serve him?"

"By executing this decree addressed to you by the supreme divan, commanding you to behead a villain, one Pacho Bey, who insinuated himself into your confidence some time since."

"I shall be glad to do it; but he is a difficult man to lay hands on, brave, quick-tempered, clever and cunning. I must match wits with him. He may appear at any moment; it is important that he should not see you, and that no one should suspect who you are. It is but two hours from here to Drama. Go there and await my

coming; I shall return this evening, and you may consider your mission fulfilled."

The *capidgi-bachi* signified that he understood the stratagem, and rode on toward Drama.

Ismaël, fearing that the nazir, whose acquaintance with him was of recent date, might sacrifice him, with customary Turkish indifference, set off at full speed in the opposite direction. About an hour later he fell in with a Bulgarian monk, with whom he exchanged clothes. Thus disguised he traveled through Upper Macedonia without accident. He finally reached the great convent of Servian Caloyers among the mountains which give birth to the river Axius, and was admitted there under a false name; but within a few days, being certain of the discretion of the monks, he revealed his identity to them.

When Ali learned of the ill-success of his latest attempt he at once accused the nazir of conniving at Pacho Bey's escape. But he easily justified himself before the divan by giving a precise account of what took place. That was what Ali wished, and he used the information thus acquired to follow the tracks of the fugitive, whose retreat was soon discovered. As Pacho Bey's innocence was made to appear in the explanations given to the divan, it was impossible to ask for another firman of death against him, and his enemy made a pretence of abandoning his pursuit of him, the better to conceal the new plot he was concocting.

Athanasius Vaya, the leader of the murderers of the Kardikiotes, to whom he had confided his plot to murder Ismaël, begged him to bestow upon him the honor of the undertaking, swearing that he should not escape his dagger. The plan of the master and the bravo was concealed under a pretended quarrel, which caused the whole city to stare. After a terrible scene in public Ali turned

the close confidant of his iniquities out of the seraglio, overwhelming him with abusive epithets, and swearing that he would have him hanged were it not that he was the son of his children's foster mother. He even carried the comedy so far as to have several strokes of the lash applied. Vaya, with every indication of abject terror and deep mortification, ran about from one to another of the leading citizens, vainly imploring them to intercede for him. The only favor Mouktar Pacha could obtain for him was a decree of banishment which permitted Vaya to go to Macedonia.

The hired assassin quitted Janina with manifestations of the most violent despair, and pursued his journey with the speed of a man who fears pursuit. On his arrival on Macedonian territory he assumed the garb of a Caloyer, and claimed to be a monk on a pilgrimage to Mount Athos, pretending that his safety required him to adopt that disguise and that excuse for his journey. On his road he fell in with one of the alms-collecting brethren of the great Servian convent, to whom he related his disgrace in forcible language, and begged him to procure his admission as a lay brother of his convent.

Overjoyed at the opportunity to lead within the pale of the church a man whose crimes had made him famous, the brother hastened to inform the superior of his petition, and he no less eagerly announced to Pacho Bey that they were about to receive as a lay brother his compatriot and companion in misfortune, Athanasius Vaya, whose story he repeated as it had just been told to him. Pacho Bey was not deceived; he divined that Athanasius had come to the convent for no other purpose than to murder him, and communicated his suspicions to the superior, who had already conceived a strong friendship for him, and who delayed the assassin's admission long

enough to give Pacho Bey time to escape. He set out for Constantinople, and when he arrived there determined to breast the storm, and to fight his enemy openly.

Pacho Bey was endowed with noble features and manly self-confidence, and he had the additional advantage of speaking fluently all the languages of the Ottoman Empire. He could not fail to make his mark in the metropolis, and to find employment for his distinguished talents. Nevertheless his inclination led him first of all to seek the exiles of Epirus, who were his old companions in arms, and friends or relatives all; for he was allied to the principal families, and was even akin to his enemy Ali-Pacha, through his wife.

He had learned what the poor woman had been compelled to suffer on his account, and he feared that she would have to bear the additional burden of the war he was about to begin against his implacable foe. While he was hesitating between his love for the one and his hatred for the other, he learned that his wife was dead of grief and want. His anxiety being thereby changed to despair he set about his self-appointed task.

At this juncture heaven sent a friend to console him and help him wreak his vengeance. He was a Christian of Aetolia, named Paleopoulo, and was on his way to Russian Bessarabia to form an establishment there, when he fell in with Pacho Bey, and formed with him the strange coalition which was to change the destiny of the Tepalenian dynasty.

Paleopoulo informed his companion in misfortune of a memoir, presented to the divan in 1812, which would have disgraced Ali forever, had he not escaped by virtue of the weighty political events which then engrossed the attention of the Ottoman cabinet. The sultan at that time swore by the tombs of his glorious

ancestors that he would follow up the affair when he could. The essential thing now was simply to remind him of it. Pacho Bey and his friend drew up a new memoir, and as they were well aware of the sultan's cupidity, they took care to emphasize Ali's enormous wealth, his scandalous exactions, and the vast sums of which he defrauded the treasury. By purging the accounts of his administration, millions could be recovered. To these financial considerations Pacho Bey added others as convincing. Speaking like a man sure of his facts, and well acquainted with the localities in question, he agreed to sacrifice his head if, in the face of Ali's troops and strongholds, he did not arrive in front of Janina with twenty thousand men without burning the priming of a musket.

Judicious as his plans seemed to be, they did not commend themselves to his Highness' ministers, who were in receipt of handsome pensions from him against whom they were directed. Furthermore, as it is customary in Turkey for the great fortunes of the government servants to have their foundation in the imperial treasury, it seemed more fitting to wait and acquire Ali's treasures by inheritance than to attempt to lay hands upon them by a war, which would certainly absorb a large part of them. Thus, while applauding Pacho Bey's zeal, they gave him evasive replies at first, and came at last to a definite refusal.

At this juncture died Paleopoulo, the old Aetolian, after announcing to his friends the impending insurrection of Greece, and urging Pacho Bey to persevere in his projects of vengeance, assuring him that Ali would soon go down under his blows.

Left to his own devices, Pacho Bey, before devoting himself to his work of vengeance, affected to enter with

great zeal into the most minute observances of the Mohammedan form of worship. Ali, who had established a regular system of espionage by *capi-tchoadars* about him, concluded that he had become of no importance when he learned that he frequented the society of oulemas and dervishes, and ceased to concern himself about him.

By favor of his crimes he now reigned over a population as large as that of the united kingdoms of Sweden and Norway. But his ambition was still unsatisfied. The occupation of Parga was very far from exhausting his greed, and the very joy which it afforded him was clouded by the flight of the Pargans, who had found shelter in a foreign land from his persecution. So it was that almost before he had completed the conquest of Middle Albania, he was inciting insurrection against young Moustaï Pacha in Scutari, the latest object of his lust for power. He also maintained numerous spies in Wallachia, Moldavia, Thrace and Macedonia, and by their means he was to all intent present in person everywhere, and involved in all the public and private intriguing throughout the empire. He had paid over to the English agents the price of the sale of Parga, but he reimbursed himself fivefold by means of the forced gifts of his vassals, and by the real estate of the Pargans, which became his property. His palace at Tepalen had been rebuilt, huger and more gorgeous than ever, at the expense of the people. Janina was embellished with new edifices; summer-houses of the most magnificent description rose along the shores of the lake; in short, the luxuriousness and ostentation of his mode of life was on a par with his fortune. His sons and grandsons were placed in the most eminent offices. In a word, he was a sovereign, without the title.

He did not lack flatterers, even among the writers of his day. A poem in his honor was printed at Vienna, also a French-Greek grammar, which was dedicated to him, and in which the titles of Most High, Most Mighty, and Most Gracious were lavished upon him, as if he were a man whose lofty virtues and great deeds echoed around the world. A native of Bergamo, learned in the science of heraldry, devised an escutcheon for him, representing a lion embracing three cubs upon a ground *gules*, emblematic of the Tepalenian dynasty. He already had a consul at Leucadia whom the English suffered to remain there; it was said that they even encouraged him to declare himself hereditary Prince of Greece, under the nominal suzerainty of the sultan; for their real purpose was to make him their tool as well as their protégé, in order to establish a political counterpoise to the hospodars of Moldavia and Wallachia, who had been for twenty years past nothing more than disguised agents of Russia. Nor was this all; many of those men, fugitives from the laws of all countries, with whom the Levant is always overflowing, had taken up their abode in Epirus, and their suggestions contributed not a little to excite Ali's ambition; some of them went so far as to salute him frequently with the title of king, which he, from policy, pretended to put aside with indignation. He also disdained to fly a flag of his own, after the manner of most barbaric potentates, lest he should thereby compromise his power for mere childish gratification of his self-esteem; and he lamented the insane ambition of his children, who would ruin him, he said, because they all wanted to be viziers. For that reason he did not place his hope and his confidence in them, but in the adventurers of every description, pirates, counterfeiters, renegades, assassins, whom he had in his

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pay and whom he looked upon as the most reliable props of his power; and he sought to attach them to him, as men whom he might some day need; for the favors which fortune showered upon him did not blind him to the dangers of his position.

"A vizier," he very often said, "is a man covered with furs, and sitting upon a barrel of powder, which a spark may explode at any moment."

The divan had granted all the concessions that he asked, pretending to know nothing of his schemes of revolt, and his correspondence with the enemies of the State. But this apparent weakness was simply judicious temporizing. It was thought that Ali, who was very old, could not live much longer, and it was hoped that by his death continental Greece, which was in a measure withdrawn from the sultan's domination, would be fully restored to that potentate.

Meanwhile Pacho Bey, having determined to undermine Ali's influence by working in secret, had become the intermediary of all those who demanded justice for his exactions. He succeeded in getting his own complaints and those of his clients to the sultan's ear. He sympathized with his misfortunes, and made a beginning toward indemnifying him for them by appointing him one of his *capidgi-bachis*. At the same time he admitted to his council Abdi-Effendi of Larissa, one of the wealthiest noblemen of Thessaly, who had been forced to flee from the tyranny of Veli Pacha. The two new dignitaries having enlisted Khalet-Effendi in their party, determined to make use of his influence to carry out their scheme of vengeance on the Tepalens.

When he learned of Pacho Bey's elevation, Ali awoke from the sleep of fancied security, and was extremely troubled and anxious. Foreseeing the injury which this

man, reared in his own school, might cause him, he cried:

"Ah! if heaven would give me back my youthful strength, I would go and strike him down in the face of the divan!"

An excellent opportunity to aim a blow at his influence was soon afforded his enemies. Veli Pacha who had quadrupled the taxes of Thessaly in his own interest, had committed so many grievous exactions to that end, that numbers of the people preferred to submit to the grief and danger of expatriation rather than abide under so tyrannical a régime. A large number of Greeks sought shelter at Odessa, while the great Turkish families went to Constantinople, and grouped themselves about Pacho Bey and Abdi-Effendi, who were not slow to intercede in behalf of the exiles. The sultan, who did not yet dare to take severe measures openly against the Tepalen family, could safely relegate Veli to the obscure post of Lepanto, and he was, notwithstanding his dissatisfaction, obliged to obey. He therefore abandoned the new palace he had just built at Rapchani, and set out for his place of exile, accompanied by Morlachian actors, dancing gypsies, bear tamers, and a swarm of prostitutes.

When this blow was aimed at him in the person of the most powerful of his sons, Ali thought it incumbent upon him to terrify his enemies by an audacious stroke. Three Albanians were dispatched to Constantinople to kill Pacho Bey. They succeeded in getting within reach of him as he was on his way to the mosque of Saint-Sophia, whither the sultan was to go the same day to attend the canonical Friday service of prayer, and fired several pistol shots at him, which wounded him, but not mortally.

The assassins, taken red-handed, were hanged before the gate of the imperial seraglio, after confessing that they were employed by the Pacha of Janina. The divan, realizing at last that so dangerous a man must be gotten rid of at any price, recapitulated all his crime and pronounced against him the sentence of Fermanly, which was ratified by a bull of the grand mufti. It set forth that Ali Tepalen, after having several times obtained pardon for his felonies, had committed the crime of *lèse-majesté* in the first degree, and provided that he should be put under the ban of the empire as one relapsed into sin, if he failed to appear within forty days on the golden threshold of the Door of Felicity of the monarch who dispenses crowns to the reigning princes of the world, there to justify himself. As may be imagined, Ali was careful not to obey this order to appear in person. Thereupon the divan ordered the thunders of excommunication to be launched at his head by the grand mufti.

Ali was visiting Parga for the third time since it became his, when his secretaries informed him that naught but the rod of Moses could shelter him from the wrath of Pharaoh. That was an enigmatical method of telling him that he had nothing more to hope. But Ali, relying upon his luck, persisted in the belief that he could, as usual, extricate himself from his dilemma with money and scheming; and without pausing in the pursuit of pleasure in which he was engaged, he contented himself with sending gifts and suppliant messages to Constantinople. But they were equally without effect. No one dared to transmit them to the sultan, who had sworn that any man who mentioned Ali Tepalen's name should lose his head.

As Ali received no reply he fell a prey to the keenest anxiety. As he opened the Koran one day to consult it as to his future, his divining wand stopped at verse eighty-two of chapter XIX., where it is said:

"He flatters himself vainly. We will record his ostentation, and multiply his sufferings. He shall appear naked before our judgment seat."

He closed the book and spat three times into his bosom; and he was already viewing his fortune with the gloomiest forebodings when a courier arrived from the capital and informed him that all hope of pardon was gone.

He at once ordered his gondola to be made ready; he left the seraglio, gazing sadly upon the beautiful gardens where but the day before he received the adoration of his prostrate slaves. He bade his wives farewell, telling them that he should soon return, and went down to the shore. The rowers saluted him with loud acclamations. The sail was hoisted and as the wind filled it, Ali was borne away from the shore he was never to see again. He steered for Prevesa where he hoped to find Maitland, the Lord High Commissioner. But his prosperous days had gone by, and the consideration formerly shown him came to an end as his fortunes began to decline. The interview he requested did not take place.

The sultan at this time equipped a squadron, which was to sail for the coast of Epirus, after Rhamazan, with troops to operate on shore. All the neighboring pachas, as well as the Romily-Valicy, were instructed to hold themselves in readiness to march with their spahis and timariots against Ali, whose name was stricken from the list of viziers. Pacho Bey, appointed Pacha of

Janina and Delvino on the condition of conquering them, was made commander-in-chief of the expedition.

And yet, notwithstanding all these orders, at the beginning of April, two months after the attempt to murder Pacho Bey there were not two soldiers in the field to march into Albania. Rhamazan did not end that year until July 10, the day of the new moon. In the interval Ali might have overturned their vacillating projects, and perhaps have dealt a fatal blow at the empire by openly taking the lead in the movement which was beginning to arouse Greece to feverish excitement.

As early as 1808 the Hydriotes had offered to recognize his son Veli, at that time Pacha of the Morea, as their prince if he would proclaim the independence of the islands of the archipelago. The Moreans had no abhorrence for him until he refused to assent to their throwing off the yoke, and would have become reconciled to him if he had reconsidered his refusal.

On the other hand the sultan, who was bent upon war, was reluctant to spend anything upon it; and it was a simple matter to corrupt some of the great vassals, who were forced to march at their own expense against a man whom they had no interest in crushing. The means of seduction were not wanting to Ali, who possessed immense wealth, but he preferred to retain it in order to maintain the contest which he deemed inevitable. Consequently he issued a general appeal to all the fighting men of Albania, whatever their religion. Mussulmans and Christians alike, lured by the prospect of booty and of handsome pay, flocked to his standard in great numbers.

He organized all these adventurers, on the model of the Armatolis, into companies, in command of which he placed captains of his own selection; then he gave each

company a post to defend. This plan was, of all that he might have adopted, best adapted to the country, where only a guerrilla war can be successfully carried on, and where large armies cannot find means of subsistence.

The Armatolis committed so many depredations on their way to the stations assigned them that the provinces sent messengers to Constantinople requesting their suppression. The divan replied by informing the petitioners that it was for them to put down the insurrection, and persuade the bandits to turn their arms against Ali, who had nothing more to hope from the sultan's clemency. At the same time circular letters were sent to the men of Epirus, calling upon them to abandon the cause of the rebel, and to devise means of ridding themselves of a scoundrel who after grievously oppressing them for so many years, was preparing to subject them to all the evils of a disastrous war. Ali, who had always had spies everywhere, redoubled their numbers and activity. Not a letter could be dispatched in Epirus without being unsealed and read by his agents. To make assurance doubly sure he bade his scouts put to death on the spot every bearer of dispatches who was unprovided with an order signed by him, and to send all travelers who desired to enter Epirus to him at Janina. These measures were taken with especial regard to Suleyman Pacha who had superseded Veli in the government of Thessaly, and Ali himself in the office of provost of highways. Suleyman had for his secretary one Anagnosto, a Greek, born in Macedonia, whence he had fled with his parents to escape Ali's persecution, who had at once seized their property. This Anagnosto had joined the court party, less to be revenged upon Ali, than to forward the cause of the Greeks, whose independence he was working secretly to accomplish. He persuaded Suleyman that

the Greeks would be useful in crushing Ali, for whom they entertained a profound hatred, and induced him to make known to them the sentence of Fermanly pronounced upon the rebellious pacha. He inserted in the Greek translation of it, which he was instructed to make, divers ambiguous phrases, which were looked upon by the Christians as a call to arms, and an incitement to throw off the yoke. In an instant all Hellas was in arms. This did not fail to disturb the Mohammedans; but the Greeks alleged as a pretext the necessity of protecting their persons and property against the brigandage of the bands which were springing up on all sides. This was the first step toward insurrection in Greece; it took place in the month of May, 1820, and extended from Pindus to Thermopylæ. However, the Greeks, content with having won the right to look to their own security with arms in their hands, continued to pay their dues, and abstained from any act of hostility.

Upon receiving the news of this significant movement, Ali's trusty counsellors advised him to turn it to account. "The Greeks are in arms," they said, "awaiting a leader; offer your services to lead them. You are hated by them, it is true, but their sentiments can be made to change. To do that it is enough to make them believe (and you can easily do it) that you have determined, if they will join forces with you, to embrace Christianity and make them independent."

There was no time to lose, for affairs wore a blacker look from day to day. And so Ali made haste to convene what he called a grand divan, to which he summoned the leading Mussulmans and the leading Christians. This assemblage comprised men who differed widely in principle and belief, and who wondered to find themselves together. The venerable Gabriel,

Archbishop of Janina and uncle of the ill-fated Euphrosine; the former chief of police, Abas, who presided at the execution of that Christian martyr; the saintly Bishop of Velas who still bore the marks of the chains with which the pacha had once loaded him, and Porphyrus, Archbishop of Arta, a man better fitted to wear the turban than the mitre. Gabriel was compelled by force to attend.

Ashamed of the part he was sunk so low as to play, Ali hesitated long before he could make up his mind to speak; at last he addressed the Christians thus:

"O Greeks! if you scrutinize my conduct with unprejudiced eyes, you will find therein manifest proofs of the confidence and consideration which I have at all times accorded you. What pacha has ever treated you as I have done? What other has shown so much respect for your priests and the objects of your worship? What other ever granted you the privileges you enjoy? for you are admitted to my councils, and the police, as well as the government of my states, is in your hands. And yet it is far from my purpose to belittle the ills I have inflicted upon the Greeks; but alas! they are the result of my forced obedience to the perfidious and inhuman orders of the Sublime Porte. Upon it must the responsibility be laid; for if my actions are carefully examined, it will appear that I have never done harm to anyone except when forced to it by circumstances. Question them; they will tell the story better than any detailed apology.

"My position respecting the Souliotes made any middle course impracticable, and as soon as I had broken with them I was reduced to the necessity of driving them out of my dominions or exterminating them. I knew the envenomed policy of the Ottoman cabinet too

well not to anticipate that it would declare war upon me sooner or later; and I felt that it would be impossible for me to make head against it if I had to repel its aggressions on the one hand, and on the other to contend with the warlike Souliotes.

"I can say the same concerning the Pargans! You are well aware that their city was the lair of my enemies, and whenever I requested them to adopt a different line of conduct they replied only by insults and threats. They persistently bore aid to the Souliotes when I was at war with them, and at this moment if they were still in possession of their city you would see that they would admit the sultan's forces into Epirus. All this, however, does not blind my eyes to the fact that my enemies reprehend my conduct in unmeasured terms; and I, too, condemn it, and deplore the mistakes I have been forced into making by the fatality of my situation; not only do I regret the evil I have done, but I have tried to repair it. Strong in the sincerity of my repentance, I have not hesitated to go to the very men I have injured most grievously. Thus I have had a large number of Souliotes in my service for a long while, and some of those who accepted my invitation to serve me are to-day occupying important positions. Recently, in order to effect a complete reconciliation, I have written to those who are still in foreign lands to return without fear to their fatherland; and I have received reliable advices to the effect that my proposition has been enthusiastically accepted everywhere. The Souliotes will soon have returned to the land of their forefathers, and will fight beneath my flag against our common enemies, the Osmanlis.

"As for the covetousness laid to my charge, it seems to me that I can easily justify it by the constantly recurring

necessity of satisfying the insatiable greed of the Ottoman ministry, which has made me buy my tranquillity over and over again. In that matter I confess that I acted in my own interest, and I did the like again in accumulating treasure to maintain the war the divan has at last declared upon me."

At this point Ali paused, and ordered a cask filled with gold pieces to be emptied upon the carpet.

"This is a portion of the treasure I have guarded so carefully, most of which has been wrested from the Turk, our common enemy; it is yours. Now more than ever before I am pleased that I have remained the friend of the Greeks. Their gallantry is a sure guaranty of victory; and soon we will erect an empire for them, by driving the Osmanlis beyond the Bosphorus. Bishops and priests of the prophet Issa, bless the arms of your children the Christians. Citizens, to you I entrust the duty of defending your rights, and judiciously guiding the destinies of the brave nation whose interests are identical with my own."

This discourse produced very different impressions upon the leading citizens and upon the Greek archons. The former made no other reply than to gaze despairingly upward, while the others murmured assentingly. A great number were altogether uncertain what course to adopt. The leader of the Mirdites, the same man who formerly refused to massacre the Kardikiotes, declared that he and all the Skipetars of the Latin communion would never serve against the sultan, their lawful sovereign. But his words were drowned by shouts of: "Long live Ali-Pacha! Long live the restorer of liberty!" uttered by certain leaders of bands of adventurers and robbers.

On the following day, May 24, 1820, Ali addressed a

circular letter to his Christian brethren, wherein he announced his purpose thereafter to treat them as his most faithful subjects, and informed them that from that day forth the tribute which they paid to his family was remitted. He concluded by urging them to send him troops; but the Greeks, who had learned to put no confidence in his promises, remained deaf to his request.

At the same time he was dispatching emissaries to the Montenegrins and Servians to incite them to revolt, and planning uprisings in Wallachia, Moldavia, and even in Constantinople itself.

While the supporters of the Ottoman cause were rallying to its standard slowly and in small numbers, every day witnessed the gathering of large bodies of Toxides, Iapyges and Charmides at the castle of Janina; so that Ali, who knew that Ismaël Pacho Bey had boasted that he would come before Janina without burning a priming, proclaimed that he himself would not treat with the Porte until he and his army were within eight leagues of Constantinople.

He had put the following places in condition to withstand attack: Ochrida, Arlona, Canino, Berat, Cleïsoura, Premiti, the port of Panormos, Santi-Quaranta, Buthrotum, Delvino, Argyrokastron, Tepalen, Parga, Prevesa, Sdili, Paramythia, Arta, the post of Five Wells, Janina and its castles. There were in these places four hundred and twenty guns of all calibres, mostly of bronze, and mounted upon siege carriages; also seventy mortars. Besides these, there were in the castle on the lake, aside from the stationary guns, forty field pieces, and sixty mountain pieces, a quantity of Congreve rockets, a former gift from the English, and an enormous supply of ammunition. Lastly, a line of semaphores was being constructed from Janina to Prevesa, in order

that Ali might speedily be advised of the appearance of the Ottoman fleet, which should make its appearance in that quarter.

Ali, whose vigor seemed to increase with years, superintended everything and showed himself everywhere, appearing amid the men at work, now upon a litter borne by Albanians, and again in a conveyance constructed like a platform on wheels, but generally on horseback. He frequently sat down upon the bastions in the midst of the batteries, and conversed familiarly with those who stood about. He would tell them of the success, with which Cara Bazaklia, vizier of Scutari, in years gone by resisted the armies of the sultan, who had pronounced the same sentence of Fermanly against him; how the rebellious vassal, entrenched in his citadel with seventy-two gallant fellows, had witnessed the destruction of the combined forces of the fifteen great satrapies of the Ottoman Empire, at his very feet, almost utterly annihilated in a single day by the Guegues, although they were commanded by twenty-two pachas. He also recalled the brilliant victory won by Passevend Oglou, Pacha of Widdin, which was of comparatively recent date, and was commemorated in the battle songs of the Roumelian *klephti*.

Meanwhile his two sons, Mouktar and Veli, arrived at Janina, at almost the same moment. The latter was compelled, or thought himself compelled, to evacuate Lepanto before a superior force, and made a rather gloomy report to his father, especially touching the wavering fidelity of the Turks. Mouktar, on the other hand, who had been conducting an extensive inquisition in Musachi, had noticed nothing but friendly feeling there, and imagined that the Chaonians, whom he found

prepared for war, had taken up arms for no other purpose than to assist his father. He was wofully mistaken. That people hated Ali only the more bitterly because they were obliged to dissemble their hatred, and had put themselves in condition to repel aggression from any quarter.

The advice which the two sons offered their father as to the line of conduct he would do well to pursue toward the Mohammedans, exhibited their difference of opinion. It afforded a vent for the bad blood that existed between them, of which this discussion was the pretext, the real cause being their father's inheritance which they both coveted with equal greed. Ali had collected all his wealth at Janina, and thenceforth neither of his sons would dream of leaving so tender a parent. They showered proofs of their affection upon him; they had left Lepanto and Berat respectively, simply to share his danger. But he was not the dupe of all their protestations, of which he could easily fathom the motive, and this man, who had never loved his children, suffered cruelly when he found that they did not love him.

But he soon had other disappointments to digest. One of his gunners having murdered a servant of his son Veli, he undertook to punish the culprit; but when the punishment was about to be inflicted the whole artillery force rebelled. To save appearances he was fain to have some one implore pardon for the man he dared not punish. This incident showed him plainly that authority was slipping from his hands, and made him begin to suspect the fidelity of his soldiers. The arrival of the Ottoman fleet completed his enlightenment as to their real state of feeling. Mussulmans and Christians, all the people of Northern Albania who had cleverly

concealed their disaffection behind exaggerated manifestations of devotion, at once made their submission to the sultan. The Ottomans, following up their success, laid siege to Parga, where Mehemet, Veli Pacha's oldest son, was in command. He made preparations for a sturdy resistance, but was betrayed by his troops, who delivered the city, and was constrained to surrender at discretion. He was very kindly treated by the naval commander to whom he handed his sword. He gave him the best stateroom on the flag-ship, provided him with a brilliant suite, and persuaded him that he would be overwhelmed with favors by the sultan, whose anger was directed against his grandfather only, and who had no purpose to punish even him otherwise than as a clement monarch, but would content himself by relegating him with his treasure to one of the principal satrapies of Asia Minor. He was induced to write to his family and its supporters to this effect, so that they might be persuaded to lay down their arms.

The taking of Parga made a deep impression upon the Epirotes who valued its possession far above its real importance. Ali tore his clothes and cursed his prosperous days, when he did not know enough to keep a check upon his resentment, or to foresee the possibility of a change of fortune.

The fall of Parga was succeeded by that of Arta, of Mugliana, where the pacha's country house was located, and of the post of Five Wells. Atop of all these disasters came the most crushing intelligence of all; Omer Briones, whom Ali had recently appointed commander-in-chief, having in the old days despoiled him of all his property, had gone over to the enemy with his whole army.

Thereupon Ali decided to carry out a plan he had

formed in anticipation of possible disaster, and destroy the city of Janina, which would otherwise furnish the enemy with good quarters and means of attacking the castles, to which he had retired. As soon as his resolution became known the people of Janina thought of nothing but saving themselves and their possessions from the ruin which nothing could avert from their country. But the majority of them had hardly begun their preparations for departure when the pacha gave to those Albanians who were still faithful to him permission to loot the city.

Immediately the houses were invaded by soldiers freed from all restraint. The metropolitan cathedral, where both Greeks and Turks deposited their money, jewels, valuable papers and even merchandise, was the first goal of the pillagers. Nothing was respected; they broke open the wardrobes containing the consecrated vestments; they opened the tombs of the archbishops in which reliquaries embellished with precious stones were laid away; and the altar was bespattered with the blood of brigands who fought with swords for the chalices and silver crosses.

The city offered a no less shocking spectacle; Christians and Mussulmans were maltreated alike; the harems and women's quarters were carried by storm, and modesty was everywhere at daggers drawn with violence. Some citizens, more courageous than the rest, essayed to defend their houses and their families against the bandits, and the clash of weapons was mingled with shrieks and groans. Suddenly a terrible explosion drowned all other sounds, and a shower of bombs and shells and Congreve rockets carried fire and devastation to every quarter of the city, which soon became one vast conflagration.

Ali, seated upon the broad terrace of the castle on the

lake which vomited flame and smoke like a volcano, directed the manœuvres, pointing out the spots at which the match was to be applied. Churches, mosques, libraries, bazars, dwellings, all were consumed; the flames spared nothing but the forked gallows, which were left standing alone amid the ruins.

Meanwhile, of the thirty thousand inhabitants whom Janina could boast a few hours before, perhaps half had succeeded in escaping. But they were only a few leagues from the city when they fell in with the advance guard of the Ottoman army, who, instead of affording them aid and protection, attacked and robbed them, and sent them on to the camp where captivity awaited them.

Thereupon this remnant of a people, hemmed in between a conflagration and a hostile army, death behind them and slavery before, uttered a fearful shriek, and fled in every direction; but those who eluded the Turks were stopped in the defiles by the mountaineers hurrying up at scent of the quarry; naught but brute strength could force its way through.

There were some however to whom their terror gave extraordinary strength; mothers with infants at their breasts ran the whole distance from Janina to Arta, fourteen leagues, on foot in a single day. But others were seized with the pains of child-birth as they fled, and breathed their last in the forests giving birth to helpless creatures, who, being left without nourishment, could not long survive them. Many young women, after disfiguring themselves as a means of protection, took refuge in caverns, where they died of fear and hunger.

The Albanians, drunk with debauchery and rapine, refused to return to the castle, and thought of nothing but returning to their own province to live on their plunder. But they were attacked on the road by

peasants, who coveted their booty, and by men from Janina who had taken refuge with the peasants. The roads and mountain passes were piled high with corpses, and the trees along the roadside were transformed into gallows. The murderers did not long survive their victims.

The ruins of Janina were still smoking when Pacho Bey entered the city on August 19th. Having pitched his camp out of gunshot of the forts, he hoisted the long-tailed banner, the emblem of his rank, and caused the firman to be read which conferred upon him the titles of Pacha of Janina and Delvino. Ali from the summit of his donjon heard the Turks saluting Pacho Bey, his former retainer, as *Vali* of Epirus, and *gazi*, or victor. After this ceremony the cadi read the sentence, confirmed by the great mufti, by which Ali Tepalen Veli Zade was declared to have forfeited his dignities, and to be excommunicated, and all the faithful were forbidden to pronounce his name thereafter unless preceded by the word *cara* (black) which is applied to those who are struck from the list of orthodox Mussulmans. A marabout thereupon hurled a stone in the direction of the castle, and the anathema against "Black" Ali was repeated by the whole Turkish army, who capped it with shouts of: "Long live the Sultan! So be it!"

But mere verbal thunder of this sort was not sufficient to reduce three fortresses defended by artillerists from the different European armies, who had organized an excellent school of gunners and bombardiers. And the besieged, after they had answered the acclamations of the besiegers with disdainful hoots, began a brisk cannonade.

The rebel fleet, decked out with flags as for a holiday, sailed by under the eyes of the Turks, and saluted

them with a broadside as soon as they made a movement to approach the shore of the lake.

However, all this noisy fanfaronnade did not prevent Ali from being consumed with anxiety and chagrin. The sight of the army that was once his own now in Pacho Bey's camp, the fear of being separated forever from his sons, the thought that his grandson was in the hands of his enemies, combined to plunge him in profound melancholy. His eyes, which sleep no longer visited, were constantly filled with tears. He refused food, and for seven whole days sat upon a mat at the door of his ante-chamber, with disheveled beard, and clad in mourning garments, stretching out his hands beseechingly to his soldiers, and imploring them to kill him rather than abandon him. At the same time his wives, judging from his conduct that all was lost, filled the air with their lamentations. It seemed probable that Ali's despair would drive him into his grave, but his soldiers, in whose protestations he had previously refused to believe, represented to him that their cause was thenceforth indissolubly bound up with his, for Pacho Bey had proclaimed that all Ali's supporters would be executed as fomenters of rebellion; therefore their interest required them to uphold him to the utmost extent of their power in his resistance. They pointed out to him further that as the season was already far advanced, the Ottoman troops who had forgotten to bring their heavy siege artillery from Constantinople, could not procure it before the end of October, at which time the heavy rains would begin; that they would probably fall short of provisions before many days, and that, in any event, they would be compelled to go into winter quarters at a distance, as they could

not pass the winter in a city that was almost totally destroyed.

These arguments, advanced with the warmth of conviction, and confirmed by the evidence, began at last to have a soothing effect upon Ali's feverish, consuming anxiety. Vasiliki, the lovely Christian captive, whom he had taken to wife some time previously, completed his cure by her soft caresses and her persuasive words.

At the same time his sister Chaïnitza was giving proof of marvelous courage. She had persisted in continuing to live at her castle of Libokovo in spite of all that could be said to dissuade her. The whole population, whom she had maltreated beyond endurance, cried out for her death, but no one dared to attack her. Her mother's ghost, with whom popular superstition alleged that she held mysterious communion, was supposed to be always on the watch to protect her. The threatening figure of Kamco had appeared, so it was said, to several of the inhabitants of Tepalen; she was seen rattling the bones of the Kardikiotes, and they heard her crying loudly for more victims. The thirst for vengeance led several men to defy this peril; but twice a cavalier, clad in black, stopped them, forbidding them to lay pure hands upon an impious creature, whose punishment the Almighty would Himself inflict, and twice they retraced their steps.

Soon after, ashamed of their faint-heartedness, they tempted fortune a third time, clad in the colors of the prophet. This time the mysterious stranger did not appear to forbid them to pass, and they shouted for joy. They climbed the mountain, with their ears on the alert to detect any supernatural noise. The silence of solitude was broken only by the occasional bleating of a sheep, and the cries of birds of prey. When they

reached the plateau of Libokovo, they signaled to one another to be silent, in order to surprise the guards with whom they supposed the castle to be filled. They approached, crawling along the ground after the manner of hunters; they had reached the gate in the outer wall and were preparing to break it in, when it suddenly flew open and disclosed Chaïnitza standing on the threshold, with pistols in her belt, and a carbine in her hand, and no guards save two sheep-dogs.

"Halt, rash fools!" she cried; "neither my life nor my riches shall ever fall into your hands. If any one of you stirs without my leave, this palace and the very ground on which you stand will engulf you. My vaults are filled with ten thousand pounds of powder. I am willing to forgive you, although you little deserve it. I will even allow you to carry away these bags of gold, which will help compensate you for the losses my brother's enemies have recently inflicted on you. But begone instantly without so much as opening your mouths, and disturb not my repose henceforth; for I have at my command other instruments of destruction than saltpetre. Life is of no account to me, remember that, and your mountains may even yet, if I so choose, become the tombs of your wives and children. Now go!"

She ceased to speak, and they who had come to slay her took to their heels in deadly terror.

Some time after the plague ran through the mountains; the germs of contagion were spread by gypsies among whom Chaïnitza distributed garments impregnated therewith.

"We are of the same blood!" cried Ali proudly, when he learned what his sister had done. And from that moment he seemed to have recovered all his

audacity and youthful fire. When a messenger came to him a few days after with the news that Mouktar and Veli, won over by Pacho Bey's seductive promises, had surrendered Prevesa and Argyrokastron to him, he said coolly:

"I am not surprised; I have long known that they were unworthy to be my sons, and henceforth I have no other children and no other heirs than the defenders of my cause."

Subsequently, it being reported that they had been beheaded by command of him to whom they had surrendered, he said simply:

"They betrayed their father; they have got their just deserts. Let us talk of something else." And to show how far he was from discouragement he ordered a hotter fire than ever to be maintained against the Turks.

But their artillery had at last arrived, and they replied vigorously, and even began to make an impression on the fortress in which the old pacha was shut up. As the danger became imminent he redoubled his canteen and his energy at the same time. His vast treasure was the principal cause of the implacable war upon him, and might tempt his own soldiers to rebel, and thereby make themselves masters of it. He determined to bestow it where it would be equally secure from a *coup-de-main* and a conquest. He placed such sums as he needed presently in the powder magazine, so that he could destroy them in an instant if forced to do it. The balance was packed in strong boxes, which were thrown into the lake at different points. This work occupied fifteen nights; when it was completed Ali put to death the gypsies whom he employed to do it, and thus remained the sole possessor of the secret.

While he was thus putting his own affairs in order, he

was doing his utmost to disarrange his opponent's. A great number of Souliotes had joined the Ottoman army, eager to assist in the downfall of the man who destroyed their fatherland. Their camp which was long respected by the guns of the forts was flooded one day with shells. At first they were terrified beyond description, but soon they noticed that none of the missiles burst. They picked them up in open-mouthed astonishment, and examined them; instead of a fuse they found a roll of paper inserted in a wooden cylinder, on which these words were written: "Open with care." The paper contained a letter from Ali, a perfect masterpiece of Machiavelism. He began by admitting the justice of their taking up arms against him; he informed them that he was sending them a part of the pay which the traitor Ismaël denied to their honorable services, and that the shells which were fired into their camp contained an installment of six thousand golden sequins. He begged them to keep Ismaël busy listening to their demands, while his gondola came ashore after nightfall for some one of them to whom he would confide his whole plan. He concluded by instructing them to light three fires if they accepted his propositions.

The appointed signal soon shone out over the lake. Ali sent his boat ashore, and a Caloyer, the spiritual director of the Souliotes went aboard. He had donned his hair-shirt, and recited the prayers for the dying as if he were going to certain death. But Ali greeted him most affectionately, assured him of his repentance and good intentions, and of his esteem for the Greek captains, and handed him a paper which made him shudder. It was an intercepted dispatch from Khalet-Effendi to Ismaël, commanding him to put to death all Christians fit to bear arms. Male children, said the dispatch, were

to be circumcised and kept in reserve for future service in organizing legions on the European plan. It went on to explain in detail the method of exterminating the Souliotes, the Armatolis, the Greek tribes of the continent, and those of the islands in the archipelago.

When Ali saw the effect which this document produced upon the monk, he at once made most flattering propositions to him, protesting that his sincere purpose was to restore an independent political existence to Greece, and asking simply that the Souliotes should place a certain number of their leaders' children in his hands as hostages. He ordered cloaks and weapons to be brought and gave them to the monk, whom he then made haste to dismiss while the darkness might cover his return.

The next day Ali was reclining with his head upon Vasiliki's knee, when he was informed that the enemy was moving against the intrenchments he had thrown up amid the ruins of Janina. The outposts were already forced, and the impetuosity of the assailants carried everything before it. Ali immediately ordered preparations to be made for a sortie which he would lead in person. His chief equerry led forth the famous Arabian horse, called the Dervish; his chief huntsman brought him his weapons, celebrated throughout Epirus, where they are commemorated in the battle-songs of the Skipetars. The first was an enormous musket, of Versailles manufacture, sent by the victor of the Pyramids to Djezzar, Pacha of Saint John of Acre, who amused himself by building living men into the walls of his palace, so that he could hear their groans amid his revels; next, a carbine presented to the Pacha of Janina by Napoleon in 1806; next, Charles the Twelfth's musket; and lastly the venerated sabre of Krim-Guerai.

The signal for departure was given, the drawbridge lowered. The Guegues and the adventurers filled the air with their shouts; the assailants replied with roars of rage.

Ali took his place upon an eminence, whence his piercing glance sought to descry the leaders of the enemy. In vain did he call upon Pacho Bey and defy him to mortal combat. Spying outside the batteries the colonel of the imperial bombardiers, Hassan Stambol, he called for Djezzar's musket, and shot him dead. He took Napoleon's carbine then, and its leaden missile struck down Kekriman, Bey of Sponga, whom he once made Pacha of Lepanto. These shots made Ali's presence known, and a sharp fire was directed against him; but the bullets seemed to turn aside as they approached him. As soon as the smoke cleared away he spied Capelan, Pacha of Croyes, who had been his guest, and wounded him mortally in the breast. Capelan uttered a piercing cry, while his horse took fright, and ran wildly through the ranks. Ali slew a great number of officers one after another; every shot was deadly; they looked upon him as the exterminating angel, and confusion spread through the troops of the seraskier Ismaël, who hurried back to his lines.

Meanwhile the Souliotes had sent a deputation to Ismaël to make submission to him in good faith, and ask to be allowed to return peaceably to their country. Meeting with most humiliating and scornful treatment at his hands they at last determined to make common cause with Ali. They hesitated on the subject of hostages, and asked the pacha to place his grandson, Hussein Pacha, in their custody in exchange. Ali, after raising many difficulties, consented, and the bargain was struck. The Souliotes received five hundred thousand

piastres, and one hundred and fifty rounds of ammunition, and Hussein Pacha was delivered to them. At midnight they began to leave the imperial camp. Marco Botzaris, remaining behind with three hundred and twenty men, demolished the palisades, and then went with his little band to the top of Mount Paktoras, where he waited till daybreak in order to proclaim his defection to the whole Ottoman army. As soon as the sun rose, he ordered a general discharge of musketry, accompanied by the war cry. Some of the Turks who held an advanced post were cut to pieces, the others fled; the cry "To arms!" ran out, and the standard of the Cross was unfurled in the face of the infidel camp.

Threatening signs of a general insurrection appeared on all sides; there were portents and visions and popular rumors, and the Mohammedans were possessed with the idea that the last hour of their domination in Greece had arrived. Ali Pacha did his best to promote this moral confusion; his agents were everywhere, fanning the flames of revolution.

Ismaël Pacho Bey was deposed from his post of seraskier and was replaced in command of the army by Kurshid Pacha. As soon as Ali heard of the change, he sent an emissary to Kurshid to prepossess him in his favor. Ismaël, distrusting the Skipetars who formed part of his force, demanded hostages from them. They waxed wroth at this demand, and Ali, having been advised of their dissatisfaction, wrote to them to come over to him, waving the most seductive and glittering promises before their eyes. His overtures were received with enthusiasm by the angry mountaineers; they sent to him Alexis Nontza, his former general, who, after leaving him for Ismaël, had secretly returned to him, and was acting as a spy for him in the imperial army.

As soon as he arrived, Ali began to play a comedy, the aim of which was to clear his character from the crime committed by him against his daughter-in-law Zobeïde; for this charge, to which he could no longer reply simply by vague denials since Veli had himself revealed the dishonor of his marriage-bed, could not fail to make an unfavorable impression upon the spirit of his soldiers. So it was that the messenger had hardly set foot within the castle on the lake, when Ali ran to meet him, and clasped him in his arms. In presence of his officers and the garrison he lavished loving epithets upon him, called him his son, his dear Alexis, as truly his own blood as Salik Pacha. He shed oceans of tears, and called heaven to witness with blood-curdling oaths that Mouktar and Veli, whom he could afford to disavow because of their cowardice, were born of Emineh's adulterous amours. Then, raising his hand in malediction upon the tomb of her he had loved so dearly, he drew Nontza, dumfounded at such a reception, into his casemate, and, sending for Vasiliki, presented him to her as his son whom he had always dearly loved, but from whom he had been forced to live apart for unworthy reasons, because he was born of a Christian mother and had been brought up in the religion of Issa.

Having thus banished the scruples of his soldiers, Ali resumed his subterranean courses. The Souliotes had informed him that the sultan had made them very tempting offers to re-enter his service, and they persistently demanded from him the citadel of Kiapha, which overlooked Souli, and which he had retained for himself. He wrote them to the effect that it was his purpose to attack Pacho Bey's camp on January 26, in the morning, and requested them to make part of the attacking force. To effect a diversion they were to

descend under cover of the darkness into the valley of Janina, and take up such position there as he should point out to them, and he gave them the word *flouri* for countersign. If the attack was successful, he promised to gratify all their wishes.

Ali's letter was intercepted and fell into Ismaël's hands, who immediately formed the plan of entangling the enemy in his own net.

When the night appointed by him arrived, he put in motion a strong force under the command of Omer Briones, recently appointed pacha. His instructions directed him to skirt the western slope of Mount Paktoras as far as the village of Besdouno, and having passed the first part of the night there, to pass around the opposite side of the foot-hills, so that the sentinels posted on the enemy's towers might see them by the light of the stars, and report to Ali that the Souliotes had arrived at St. Nicholas, the place designated in his letter as their station. At the same time every preparation was made for battle, and the mortal foes, Ismaël and Ali, went to sleep that night, each cherishing the fond hope of annihilating his rival.

At daybreak a brisk cannonade from the castle on the lake and the castle of Litharitza, announced that the besieged proposed to make a sortie. Soon Ali's Skipetars, preceded by a detachment of French, Italian and Swiss adventurers, rushed forward under the Ottoman fire and carried the first redoubt which was defended by Ibrahim Aga Stambol. They found six pieces of cannon which the imperialists, notwithstanding their fright, had had the forethought to spike. Their miscalculation on the subject of these pieces, which they expected to turn against the intrenched camp, made them decide to attack the second redoubt,

commanded by the leader of the bombardiers. The Asiatic troops of Baltadgi Pacha hurried thither to defend it. At their head rode the supreme imaum of the army upon a richly equipped mule, repeating the mufti's anathema against Ali, his adherents, his castles, and even his artillery, which he fancied he could silence by his adjurations. The Mohammedan Skipetars in Ali's service turned away their eyes and spit into their bosoms to avert the curse. Superstitious fear was beginning to take possession of them when a French adventurer took aim at the imaum and laid him low amid the acclamations of the troops. At this sight the Asiatics, believing that Eblis was fighting against them in person, fell back upon the intrenched camp, whither the Skipetars, relieved from the danger of ex-communication, impetuously pursued them.

At the same instant a transaction of a very different nature was taking place at the northern extremity of the lines of circumvallation. Ali Tepalen, issuing from the castle on the lake, preceded by twelve men carrying chafing-dishes filled with burning green wood, was rowed ashore to the beach at St. Nicholas, where he expected to join forces with the Souliotes. He halted amid the ruins to await the dawn, and there learned that his troops had captured Ibrahim Aga Stambol's battery. Overjoyed by the news he sent word to them to press hard upon the second palisade, promising that, within an hour, he with the Souliotes would be in a position to assist them, and he pushed forward, preceded by two field-pieces with their caissons, and followed by fifteen hundred men, as far as a great plane tree, whence he perceived, some six hundred yards away, an encampment which he took for the Souliotes. Immediately Kyr Lekos, prince of the Mirdites, went forward

with an escort of twenty-five men, and waved a white flag when he was within speaking distance, calling to them to come forward with the countersign. An Ottoman officer came forward and was recognized as a friend upon pronouncing the word *flouri*. Lekos at once sent a messenger to Ali to say that he could approach. He rode off at full speed while the prince went on to the camp where he was immediately surrounded and cut down with his twenty-five men.

As soon as he received the message, Ali led his troops forward, but with precaution, being somewhat disturbed because the detachment did not return. Suddenly fierce shouts and a sharp fusillade from among the vines and thickets showed him that he had allowed himself to be led into an ambuscade; and at that moment Omer Pacha charged his vanguard, who scattered, crying "treason" as they ran. Ali cut down the fugitives without pity; but fright ran away with them, and as he was borne along with the torrent he spied the Kersales and Baltadgi Pacha descending the slopes of Mount Paktoras, where they had stationed themselves to bar his passage. He tried another road, that leading toward Dgeleva, but found it occupied by the Iapyges of Bim Bachi Aslon of Argyrokastron. He was surrounded; it was all over with him; his last hour had come. He felt that it was so, and thought of nothing but selling his life as dearly as possible. He assembled his trustiest servitors about him, and prepared to make a desperate charge upon Omer Pacha; but suddenly, with the inspiration of despair, he set fire to his caissons. The Kersales, who were just about to lay hands upon them, disappeared in the shower of stones and debris which filled the air for a long distance. Under cover of the smoke and confusion he succeeded in retreating with his

force under the fire of the castle of Litharitza, where he showed fight again, to give the fugitives time to rally, and to bear aid as he had promised to those who were fighting on the other side.

They had carried the second battery and were attacking the intrenched camp, where Ismaël managed his defence so cleverly that he succeeded in concealing the movement which was in progress in their rear. Ali, divining the object of a manœuvre, which endangered the safety of those whom he had promised to succor, and as he could neither assist them nor warn them, because of the distance, tried to retard Omer Pacha's advance, hoping that his Skipetars would either see him or hear him. He cheered on the fugitives, who recognized him from afar by his scarlet dolman, the dazzling whiteness of his horse, and the terrible cries that he uttered; for in the heat of battle this extraordinary man renewed the vigor and daring of his youth. Twenty times he led his soldiers to the charge, and as often he was compelled to fall back upon the castles. He called his reserves into action, but they were forced to give ground. Fate had declared against him. The troops who attacked the intrenched camp were taken between two fires, and he could not help them out of their difficulty. He foamed with rage, and threatened to hurl himself single-handed into the midst of his enemies. The *tchoadars*, who surrounded him begged him to moderate his transports, and meeting with nothing but refusals, they declared that they proposed to assure his safety, if he persisted in exposing himself like a common soldier. Cowed by this unfamiliar language Ali allowed himself to be dragged back to the castle on the lake, while his troops scattered in every direction.

The pacha did not, however, allow himself to be

discouraged by this check. Although reduced to the last extremity, he flattered himself that he might yet be able to make the Ottoman Empire tremble, and from the depths of his castle he stirred all Greece to the boiling point. The uprising he had incited without calculating its results, spread with the rapidity of flame along a train of powder, and the followers of Nahomet were beginning to tremble, when Kurshid Pacha, having crossed the Pindus range at the head of an army of eighty thousand men, arrived at the camp at Janina.

His tent was hardly pitched when Ali welcomed him with a salute of twenty-one guns, and sent a flag of truce with a letter congratulating him upon his opportune arrival. This letter, insinuating and adroit, was well calculated to make a powerful impression upon Kurshid. Ali wrote that, being driven by the infamous falsehoods of a former servant of his, named Pacho Bey, to resist, not the authority of the sultan, before whom he bowed his aged, sorrow-laden head, but the traitorous plots of his advisers, he esteemed himself happy, in his misfortune, to find that he had an opportunity to deal with a vizier well-known for his eminent qualities. He added that those qualities had undoubtedly been taken far below their real worth by a divan, wherein men were esteemed in proportion to the sums they expended to satisfy the greed of ministers. Otherwise, how happened it that Kurshid Pacha, Viceroy of Egypt after the departure of the French, and conqueror of the Mamelukes, had been rewarded for his services in no other way than by being recalled? Having twice been Romily-Valicy, why was he relegated to the obscure post of Salonica, when he should have been allowed to enjoy the fruit of his labors? After being appointed Grand Vizier, and called upon to pacify Servia, instead of conferring

upon him the government of that kingdom which he compelled to bend the knee to the sultan, they sent him off in great haste to Aleppo to put down a paltry uprising of emirs and janissaries, and he had no sooner arrived in the Morea than he was sent on an expedition against an old, old man.

He then descended to details, described to Kurshid the savagery, the greed and the incapacity of Pacho Bey, as well as of the pachas who served under him,—how they had estranged the minds of the people, and had succeeded in displeasing the Armatolis and especially the Souliotes, who might be brought back to their duty with much less trouble than these injudicious commanders had taken to drive them away from it. He put forward a multitude of specious arguments on that subject, and demonstrated that in advising the Souliotes to withdraw to their mountains he had simply put them in a false position so long as he did not place in their hands the castle of Kiapha, which is the key of Selleide.

The seraskier, having sent a friendly reply, ordered the military salute to be returned, gun for gun, and issued a proclamation throughout the camp, prohibiting thenceforth the application of the epithet "excommunicate" to a man of the merit and gallantry of the Lion of Tepalen. At the same time, in speaking of him he gave him the title of vizier, which, he said, he had never done aught to forfeit, and announced that he had himself come into Epirus simply to bring about a pacification.

His emissaries had recently seized certain letters addressed by Prince Alexander Hypsilantis to the Greek officers in Epirus. Without entering into details concerning the event that was to restore independence to

Greece, he urged the officers of Selleide to support Ali-Pacha in his revolt against the Porte, but to arrange their dealings with him in such way that they could at will cut loose from him, as they ought to have no other purpose than to lay hands upon his treasure, for use in setting Greece free.

A messenger from Kurshid placed these letters in Ali-Pacha's hands. The effect they produced upon his mind was such that he secretly determined to use the Greeks simply to sacrifice them to his schemes, if he could not wreak condign vengeance upon their treachery. Ali learned at the same time of the excitement prevailing throughout Turkey in Europe, the hopes of the Christians, and the fears of a rupture between the Porte and Russia. It was essential to lay aside all trifling resentment, and to unite to avert the common danger. Kurshid Pacha was ready, so said his messenger, to receive favorably any suggestion looking to a speedy pacification. He attached greater importance to such an outcome of his efforts, than to the certain glory of subduing, with the imposing forces under his command, a valiant prince, whom he had always looked upon as one of the stoutest props of the Ottoman Empire.

This language had an entirely different effect upon Ali than the seraskier anticipated. Passing abruptly from excessive despondency to excessive pride, he fancied that these overtures of reconciliation proved that it was proposed to reduce him to utter powerlessness, and he presumed to send the following propositions to Kurshid Pacha.

"If justice is the first duty of the prince, that of his subjects is to remain faithful to him and obey him. From this principle is derived the theory of rewards and punishments, and although my services have amply

justified my conduct hitherto, I will confess that I have forfeited the sultan's esteem, since he has raised the strong arm of his wrath over his slave's head. Having humbly asked his forgiveness, I shall not fear to invoke his severity against those who have abused his confidence. To that end, I offer: First. To pay the cost of the war, and all arrears of tribute due from my government, without delay. Second. As it is important, for example's sake, that the treachery of an inferior to his superior should be visited with exemplary punishment, I demand that Pacho Bey, who was formerly my servant, be beheaded, he alone being in rebellion, and responsible for all the public calamities which have come upon faithful Mussulmans. Third. I am to retain, during my life, without annual investiture, my pachalik of Janina, the coast district of Epirus, Acarnania with its dependencies, subject to all imposts, charges and tribute due or to become due to the sultan. Fourth. There shall be an amnesty for all those who have served under me up to this day, the past to be forgotten. If these conditions are not accepted without modification I am prepared to defend myself.

"Given at the castle of Janina, this seventh of March, 1821."

This mixture of humility and arrogance deserved nothing but indignation; but it was to Kurshid's interest to dissemble. He replied to Ali that it would exceed his powers to accede to such terms, which he would submit to his superiors at Constantinople, and that hostilities should be suspended, if he desired, until the courier's return.

Kurshid was as cunning as his antagonist, and took advantage of this truce to weave a plot against him. He

corrupted one of the officers of his garrison, one Metze-Abas, who, with some fifty of his followers, obtained forgiveness for his misdeeds, and permission to return to his home. But this instance of clemency seemed to have won over four hundred Skipetars, who made use of the amnesty, as well as of the money with which Ali had provided them, to arouse Toxaria and Japouria in his interest. Thus the seraskier's stratagem turned against himself, and he perceived the mistake he had made when he saw Ali's indifference, and that his demeanor betrayed no fear of defection. Indeed, how could any man of heart desert him when he displayed courage that was almost supernatural? Although suffering from a violent attack of gout, a malady that was entirely new to him, the pacha who was eighty-one years old, was carried every day to the most exposed part of the ramparts of the castle. Seated with his face toward the enemy's batteries, he gave audience to every one who chose to approach him. On this same unsheltered platform he held his councils of war, dispatched his orders, and directed the gunners at what point to fire. His face, when lighted up by the flash of the priming, took on a fantastic appearance. The bullets whistled by his ears and above his head, and the uproar made the ears of those around him bleed. Calm and impassive, he guided by signs the manœuvres of those of his soldiers who still occupied a portion of the ruins of Janina, encouraging them with his gestures and his voice. Watching the enemy's movements through a field-glass, he invented on the moment methods of circumventing them. Sometimes he entertained himself by saluting in his own way the inquisitive sight-seers and new-comers. For instance the chancellor of the French consul at Prevesa being sent on a mission to Kurshid Pacha, had no more than put his foot inside the

house set aside for his lodgings, than he received a visit from a bomb, which compelled him to leave it again precipitately. This clever shot was the work of Ali's engineer, Caretto, who on the following day dropped a shower of bullets and shells into the midst of a group of Frenchmen whom curiosity had led in the direction of Teka, where Kurshid was setting up a battery.

"I must cure these wretched little scandal-mongers of their taste for listening at doors," said Ali; "I have furnished them with abundant matter for discussion now. Christendom will know me in future only by my triumph or my downfall, which will leave many anxious hearts to be comforted."

Then, after a moment's silence, he ordered the public criers to announce to the soldiers the rising of Wallachia and the Morea, and this news, shouted from the top of the fortifications, was soon known in the imperialist camp, where it had a decidedly dampening effect.

Meanwhile the Greeks were proclaiming their independence in all directions, and Kurshid found himself unexpectedly surrounded by enemies. He incurred great risk of finding his position much changed for the worse, if the siege of the castle of Janina was prolonged. He seized upon the island in the middle of the lake, and threw up redoubts there, after which he kept up an incessant fire upon the southern front of the castle of Litharitza; and when a practicable breach had been made some forty feet in length, he decided upon an assault. The troops marched gallantly up to the breach at the first signal; they performed prodigies of valor, but after an hour's fighting Ali, carried on a litter, because of his gout, made a sortie, and the besiegers were forced to give way; they rushed back to their lines

in confusion, leaving three hundred dead at the foot of the rampart.

"The bear of the Pindus still lives," Ali sent word to Kurshid; "you may send for your dead and bury them; I restore them to you without ransom, and I will always do as much when you attack me like a brave man."

He was borne back into the fortress amid the acclamations of his soldiers, and there learned of the general uprising of Greece and the islands of the Archipelago.

"It is all over!" he said; "two men have destroyed Turkey!"

He said no more, and would give no explanation of this prophetic utterance.

On this occasion Ali did not exhibit the delight which he ordinarily exhibited after his successes; as soon as he was left alone with Vasiliki, he announced to her with tears in his eyes the death of Chaïnitza. His beloved sister, the soul of his council, was stricken with apoplexy in her palace at Libokovo, where she lived respected until her last hour. She was indebted for this great favor to her wealth and the influence of her nephew, Dgeladin, Pacha of Ochrida, who was destined to bring to a close the funeral ceremonies of the criminal race of Tepalen.

Some few months later Ibrahim, Pacha of Berat, met his death by poison; he was the last victim offered up to Chaïnitza's memory by her brother.

Ali-Pacha's position was becoming every day more precarious when the feast of Rhamazan arrived, during which the Turks are disposed to refrain from fighting. A sort of truce ensued therefore. Ali-Pacha himself affected to respect the time-honored popular customs, and allowed his Mohammedan troops to fraternize with

the imperialists at the outposts, and to consult with them concerning the various religious ceremonies appropriate to the season. Viligance was relaxed in Kurshid's camp, and his enemy availed himself of the opportunity to obtain information as to what took place there, even to the most trifling details.

He learned from his emissaries that the seraskier's staff, relying upon the "Truce of God," the name given to the tacit suspension of hostilities during the festival of the Beiram, which is the Mussulman Easter, were to attend services at the great mosque in the Loutcha quarter. This edifice, which the bombs had spared, had been respected by both factions. Ali-Pacha, who was believed to be ill, on the strength of reports set in motion by himself, that he was much weakened by fasting, and whose mind was said to have been turned to pious thoughts by fear of death, encouraged the belief that he would do nothing to disturb the repose of so sacred a day. He did, however, order his engineer, Caretto, to train thirty pieces of ordnance, cannon, mortars and howitzers upon the mosque, his alleged purpose being to celebrate the festival by a discharge of artillery.

But, as soon as he was assured that the staff of the imperial army was safely within the Loutcha mosque, he gave the signal. Immediately the thirty iron mouths belched forth a storm of cannon-balls and shells and lighted grenades, and the temple fell to pieces with a frightful crash, amid shrieks of pain and rage from the multitude who were crushed beneath its walls. Within a few moments the wind blew away the smoke, disclosing a fiery crater, and the noble cypresses which surrounded the structure burning like so many torches to light the obsequies of sixty officers and two hundred soldiers.

"Ali-Pacha is not dead!" cried the Homeric gray-beard of Janina leaping for joy; and these words, flying from mouth to mouth, put the finishing touch to the panic among Kurshid's soldiers, who were already terror-stricken at the horrible spectacle before their eyes.

Almost at the same moment Ali spied from the top of his tower the banner of the cross waving in the plain. It was borne by the insurgent Greeks on their way to give battle to Kurshid. The insurrection incited by the Pacha of Janina had gone far beyond the point at which he would have had it stop. The revolt had become a revolution. The transports of joy to which Ali gave vent at first, moderated somewhat at that thought, and were soon changed to chagrin when he was informed that a fire, started by the besiegers' bombs, had destroyed a portion of the ammunition and stores in the castle on the lake. Kurshid, thinking that this catastrophe must have shaken the old man's resolution, opened negotiations with him. He selected as his representative Moustaï Pacha's *kaya*, who addressed these remarkable words to Ali:

"Reflect upon this: the rebels bear upon their banners the emblem of the cross; you are simply a tool in their hands; beware lest you become the victim of their schemes."

Ali realized the danger; if the Porte had been more discreetly guided, he would have been pardoned on the single condition that he bring Hellas once more under her iron sceptre; and in that event the Greeks would not perhaps have held out a year against so formidable an adversary, and one so fertile in intrigue. But so simple an idea was above the intellectual faculties of the divan, which has never been capable of anything more than mere show.

After he had opened negotiations with Ali-Pacha, Kurshid's couriers covered the highways. He often sent two a day to Constantinople, and received as many from the capital. This state of things had lasted more than three weeks when he learned that the Pacha of Janina (having turned to account the time occupied by the conferences to replenish the stores destroyed by the fire, by purchasing from this self-same *kaya* of Moustaï, Pacha of Scutari, part of those which the latter had brought to the imperial camp) had rejected the ultimatum of the Porte. The fact that hostilities were renewed by Ali the instant that the negotiations were broken off proved that he anticipated that result.

Kurshid was revenged for the deception practiced upon him by the reduction of the castle of Litharitza. The Gueque Skipetars, who formed the garrison of the place, being poorly paid, tired out by the length of the siege and won over by the seraskier's gold, made the fact that the limit of their term of service with Ali-Pacha had been reached some months before, their excuse for surrendering the fortress they defended, and taking service under the flag of their enemies. Ali was left with no more than six hundred soldiers.

There was great danger that this handful of men would become discouraged, that they would desert him and betray him to a general, who had shown a very kindly disposition toward turncoats. The Greek insurgents dreaded such an event, which would have left Kurshid's whole force, now detained before the castles of Janina, free to deal with them. They therefore lost no time in sending to their former foe, now their ally, a reinforcement, which he, deeming it to be nothing more than a bid for his treasure by the Greeks, thought it his duty to decline. He saw on all sides none but enemies

seeking an opportunity to seize upon his hoards; and as his avarice increased with his danger, he had refused for some months to pay his defenders. He contented himself therefore by saying to his captains, when he informed them of the offer of the rebels, that he relied so implicitly upon their courage that he needed no reinforcement. When some of them implored him to admit two or three hundred Palicares at least into the castle, he replied:

"No; old serpents are always old serpents; I fear the Souliotes and their friendship."

Knowing nothing of this determination, the Greeks from Souli were marching toward Janina, with the Toxides, when they received the following letter from Ali:

"My beloved children; I am informed that you are taking measures to send a part of your Palicares against our enemy Kurshid. I assure you that, being impregnable in my fortress, I despise this Asiatic pacha, and that I can hold my own against him for several years to come. The only service which I request of your valor is to reduce Arta, and capture alive Ismaël Pacho Bey, my former servant, the inveterate foe of my family, and the author of all the evils and calamities which have long afflicted our unhappy country, which he has laid waste before our eyes. Do your utmost to this end; you will then lay the axe to the root of the evil, and my treasure shall be the recompense of your Palicares, whose courage acquires new value in my eyes every day."

The Souliotes returned to their mountains, furious with rage at the hoax. Kurshid profited by the dissatisfaction resulting from Ali's conduct to detach from his faction the Toxides Skipetars, with their commanders, Tahir Abas and Hagi Bessiaris, who made but two

conditions to their defection; one, that Ismaël Pacho Bey, their personal enemy, should lose his rank; the other, that the life of their old vizier should be respected.

The first of these conditions was faithfully fulfilled by Kurshid, who had secret motives for doing it, other than those which he avowed in public. Ismaël Pacho Bey was formally deposed. His horse-tails, the emblem of his rank, were taken from him, and he laid aside the commanding officer's plume; his soldiers melted away and his retainers abandoned him. Fallen to the lowest rank, he was soon cast into prison, but blamed fate alone for his misfortunes. All the agas of the Mohammedan Skipetars at once rallied around Kurshid's flag, an immense force threatened the castles of Janina, and Epirus awaited with anxiety the end that was almost in sight.

Had Ali been less miserly he might have taken into his pay all the adventurers with whom the Orient was overflowing, and have made the sultan tremble even in his capital. But the old fellow was in love with his hoards. He feared too, and perhaps with reason, that they who should contribute to his triumph might one day become his masters. He deceived himself for a long while with the idea that the English, who had sold him Parga, would never allow a Turkish fleet to enter the Ionian Sea. Being undeceived upon this point, his foresight was again set at naught by the cowardly behavior of his sons. The defection of his troops was no less disastrous to him, and he did not fully grasp the import of the insurrection he had provoked in Greece, until he saw that he had come to be, in that conflict, simply the instrument for setting free a country which he had so cruelly oppressed that he could not hope to obtain even a subordinate position there.

His last letter to the Souliotes opened the eyes of his

partisans; but being still held back by a sort of political modesty they wished to provide in any treaty they might make, that the life of their former vizier should be spared. Kurshid was compelled to produce the firmans of the Porte, wherein it was declared that if Tepalen would submit, the royal promise given to his sons would be made good—that he and they should be taken into Asia Minor, together with his harem, his servants, and his treasure, and there permitted to end their days in peace. The agas were also shown letters from Ali's sons, testifying to the kind treatment they received in their exile; and, whether because they to whom these documents were exhibited really believed what was said therein, or were simply seeking to satisfy their consciences, they all thought of nothing now but forcing the rebel to submit. Eight months' pay, tendered them in advance, finally persuaded them, and they embraced the sultan's cause with great heartiness.

The garrison of the castle on the lake, whom Ali seemed to be trying to dissatisfy by refusing them their pay, because he thought that they were too deeply compromised to venture even to accept an amnesty with the mufti's guaranty, began to desert as soon as they learned of the arrival of the Toxides at the headquarters of the imperial army. Every night those Skipetars who could leap across the moat betook themselves to Kurshid's camp.

One man alone frustrated all the efforts of the besiegers. A modern Archimedes, he froze them with terror in the heart of their camp. That man was the officer of engineers, Caretto. Although reduced to the utmost destitution, he could not forget that he owed his life to him who was now paying him for his services with the most sordid ingratitude. When Caretto came

to Epirus, Ali, who was acquainted with his skill, desired to attach him to himself, but without putting out any money. He learned that the Neapolitan had fallen madly in love with a Mussulman woman named Nekibe, and that his passion was reciprocated. By his secret order Tahir Abas accused the Sunnite, before the cadi's court, of sacrilegious commerce with an unbeliever. She could not escape capital punishment unless her lover would change his religion; if he refused to deny his God, he must also be burned alive. Caretto would not abjure, but only Nekibe perished in the flames. Ali caused Caretto to be secretly removed from the pyre, and hid him away until such time as he needed him. No one ever served him more zealously; indeed it is probable that a man of his character would never have abandoned his post if he had not been overwhelmed with insults and impositions.

Outwitting the vigilance of Athanasius Vaya, who was entrusted with the duty of preventing his desertion, he succeeded in escaping by means of a rope attached to the carriage of a gun. He fell at the foot of the ramparts, and dragged himself with a broken arm to the imperial camp. He was almost blinded by the explosion of a cartridge which scorched his face. He was received as kindly as they could be expected to receive a Christian from whom they had nothing more to fear. They gave him the bread of charity, and as a deserter is not estimated above the value of the benefit that may be derived from him, he was looked down upon and soon forgotten.

The Neapolitan's desertion was soon followed by a defection which completed the destruction of Ali's hopes. The garrison which had given him so many proofs of

its devotion to him, disheartened by his avarice, decimated by a deadly epidemic, and unequal to the amount of hard labor that was necessary for the defence of the place, suddenly opened the gates to the besiegers. But they feared an ambuscade and came forward so slowly, that Ali, who had long been prepared for any possible surprise, had time to retreat to a spot which he called his refuge.

It was a sort of fortified stockade, of solid masonry bristling with cannon, and surrounded the enclosure containing his seraglio, called the "Women's Tower." He had taken the precaution to demolish everything that could be burned, preserving naught but a mosque and the tomb of his wife Emineh, whose ghost had latterly ceased to haunt him, after informing him that she was at rest forever. Beneath was a vast natural cavern, wherein he had stored ammunition, articles of value, provisions, and such of his treasures as he had not thought fit to drop into the lake. In the same cavern a retreat for Vasiliki and his harem had been prepared, with a corner where he could snatch a moment's sleep when he was completely tired out. This den was his last intrenchment, his tomb by anticipation, and he was little concerned to see the castle fall into the hands of the imperialists. He allowed them to take peaceable possession of the entrance, set free the hostages, go about the ramparts, and count the cannon upon the platforms, which were much shaken by the falling of bombs upon them; but when they were within hearing distance, he sent a request by one of his servants that Kurshid would send him a flag of truce of distinguished rank; meanwhile he forbade any person to pass a certain point which he pointed out.

Kurshid, assuming that he wished to capitulate, being

reduced to the last extremity, deputed Tahir Abas and Hagi Bessiaris to wait upon him. Ali listened to them without rebuking them for their treachery to him, and said simply that he desired an interview with some of the principal officers.

The seraskier at once sent the grand master of his wardrobe, accompanied by his keeper of the seals, and other persons of rank. Ali received them in true vizierly style, and, after the customary salutations, invited them to go down into the cave with him. He showed them there more than two thousand barrels of powder symmetrically arranged, and upon this slumbering volcano his treasures, a multitude of articles of value, and such provisions as he still had in store. He also exhibited his bed-chamber; it was a cell-like apartment, richly furnished, of which the powder barrels formed one wall, and was reached through three doors which none but he could open. The harem was beside it. His garrison, quartered in the mosque near by, consisted of fifty men, all of whom were resolved to be buried with him in that spot, which was all that remained to him of all Greece, so recently submissive to his will.

When this visit of inspection was at an end Ali introduced to Kurshid's envoys one of his most zealous Seids, Selim, keeper of the fire, a youth endowed with features as engaging as his heart was intrepid. It was his duty to be ready to set fire to the pacha's refuge at any moment. Ali gave him his hand to kiss and asked him if he was always prepared to die; his only answer was to press the hand eagerly to his lips. Not a single movement on his master's part escaped him; to him alone Ali entrusted the care of the lantern, beside which a lighted slow match was always ready to the hand; he and his master relieved each other in watching

it. Ali drew a pistol from his belt, as if he proposed to discharge it into the powder magazine, and Kurshid's ambassadors involuntarily uttered a cry of fright and fell at his feet. He smiled at the sight, and informed them that the weight of his weapons wearied him, and he had no other purpose than to relieve himself in that respect. He requested his guests to be seated, and added that he was ambitious of bloodier obsequies than they supposed him to have in contemplation.

"I do not propose to involve in my destruction those who visit me as friends," he cried; "but Kurshid, whom I long looked upon as my brother, and his officers who have betrayed me, and his army—them I do wish to drag down with me into the tomb; in that case the sacrifice will be worthy of my renown and of the memorable end to which I aspire."

The seraskier's envoys gazed at one another in stupefaction, when Ali went on to say to them that not only were they sitting over a casemate in which two hundred thousand pounds of powder were stored, but the whole castle which they had been in such haste to seize was mined.

"Your information was incomplete on that point," he said, "the rest you have seen. This war upon me has no other object than to gain possession of my treasures; they can be destroyed in a single moment. Life is nothing to me. I might have passed what years I have still to live among the Greeks; but how could I make up my mind to drag out a wearisome existence, a helpless old man, shorn of all power, on an equal footing with people whose absolute master I once was? Thus, in whatever aspect it is viewed, my career is ended. Nevertheless, my life belongs to those about me, and this is my final determination; if a full pardon under

the sultan's hand and seal be accorded me, I will submit. I will go to Constantinople, into Asia Minor, or wherever it is thought best to send me. The things which I should see here could have no charm for me."

The ambassadors replied that they had no doubt that his proposition would be accepted, whereupon he carried his hand to his breast and to his forehead, praying Allah and Mahomet that it might be so. Then he drew his watch and handed it to the grand master of the wardrobe.

"I am sincere, my friend," he said, "and my word will be sacredly kept, but if, an hour hence, your troops have not left this castle which was treacherously surrendered to them, I will set the match to the magazine. Go back to the seraskier; warn him that if he waits a moment beyond the stated time, his army, his garrison, and I and mine, will all go up together; two hundred thousand pounds of powder will do the business for us. Take this watch, which I present to you, and do not forget that I am a determined man."

He dismissed the envoys with a friendly wave of the hand, informing them that he expected no reply until Kurshid's soldiers had evacuated the castle.

The envoys had no sooner made their report to the seraskier than he ordered the castle to be vacated. As the reason for this sudden retreat could not be mistaken, everyone exaggerated the danger, and could see nothing but mines ready to explode; the whole army, therefore, insisted upon breaking camp. Thus did Ali, with but fifty Seids at his back, cause a panic among the thirty thousand troops mustered on the shores of the Lake of Janina. Every sound that came from the castle, every puff of smoke that rose from its walls, was a cause of terror to the besiegers. And as the pacha was provisioned for a long siege, Kurshid was beginning to despair

of the success of his enterprise when he remembered Ali's suggestion of a pardon. Without disclosing the use he proposed to make of it, he proposed to his council that they should all sign a petition to the divan for mercy for Ali.

This document, drawn up in proper form, and bearing more than sixty signatures, was presented to Ali, and he was overjoyed to find that he was described there as vizier, Aulic councillor, and the most distinguished veteran among the sultan's subjects. He sent valuable presents to Kurshid and his principal officers, whom he hoped soon to corrupt, and breathed freely again, as after a long and violent storm; but on the following night he heard Emineh's voice calling him more than once, and concluded that his end was near.

For two nights in succession he fancied he heard the same voice, and he was unable to sleep at all. His appearance changed greatly, and his constancy seemed to be shaken. Leaning upon a long Indian reed he went at dawn to Emineh's tomb, and offered up a sacrifice of two snow-white lambs sent to him by Tahir Abas. He consented to forgive him on that condition, and the letters that he received from him seemed to alleviate his suffering. Some days later he saw the grand master of the wardrobe, who spoke encouragingly to him, saying that it could not be long before they received good news from Constantinople. He learned from him of the disgrace of Pacho Bey and Ismaël Pliaga, whom he hated in equal degree; and this exercise of authority, which was represented as the first installment of reparation to him, completely reassured him. He made additional presents to the seraskier's officer, who succeeded in inspiring blind confidence in himself.

Pending the arrival of the firman of pardon, which

he was assured would inevitably come at last, the master of the wardrobe advised the pacha to have an interview with Kurshid. Ali would understand, of course, that the interview could not take place in the castle, and might therefore be expected to consent to go to the island in the lake. The magnificent pavilion which he had built there in his most prosperous days had been furnished anew, and the conference was to be held there.

At this proposition Ali reflected for a moment, and the master of the wardrobe, wishing to anticipate his objections, said to him that when they requested him to go to the island, they simply wished to show the army, which was already informed of the plan, that all misunderstanding between the sultan's generalissimo and himself was at an end. He added that Kurshid would attend the conference with no other escort than the members of his divan; but that it was natural that a man under proscription should be on his guard, and that he was at liberty to send some one to inspect the proposed place of conference, and to take thither with him such number of his guards as he thought proper; furthermore that they would allow him to leave matters upon the same footing as at present in his citadel, that is to say to have the lighted slow match always ready in its keeper's hands, as the strongest guaranty they could give him.

The proposition was accepted; and Ali, having repaired to the island, congratulated himself on having taken that step when he found himself somewhat more at liberty than in his underground retreat. He sent for Vasiliki, and for his diamonds and several chests of money, and for two days thought of nothing but making his new abode habitable. At the end of that time he inquired the seraskier's reason for delaying his visit.

He pleaded indisposition, and offered, meanwhile, to permit such persons as he might desire to talk with, to visit him. Ali at once mentioned several of his former partisans, at this time serving in the imperial army, and as no objection was made to their meeting him, he availed himself of the permission to so great an extent that he passed in review the greater part of his old acquaintances, all of whom encouraged him, and filled him with hope.

But the days flew by, and neither seraskier nor firman appeared. Ali, who was anxious at first, came at last to mention either very rarely; never was deceiver more completely deceived. His sense of security was so absolute that he made no secret of his satisfaction in having gone to the island. He had begun to spin a plot for his own abduction upon the journey to Constantinople, and did not despair of forming before long a considerable faction in his interest in the imperial army.

For a week everything seemed to be progressing as he would have wished; on the morning of February 5th, Kurshid sent Hassan Pacha to Ali with his compliments, to inform him that the firman so long desired and awaited had at last arrived. Their common wish being gratified, the dignity of their monarch demanded that Ali should send orders to Selim to extinguish the match and leave the cavern, and that such of the garrison as remained within the stockade should evacuate it, after hoisting the imperial flag. Only on this condition, he said, could Kurshid place in his hands the document attesting the sultan's clemency.

Ali was terror-stricken. His eyes were opened. He replied, not without faltering, that when he left the citadel he bade Selim obey no order save a verbal one from his own mouth; that any writing, even if signed and sealed

by his hand, would be of no effect; and that he therefore asked leave to go in person to the castle to do what was required of him.

This reply led to a prolonged discussion, in which Ali's cunning and address struggled in vain against a settled determination. The protestations put forward to deceive him were strenuously insisted upon; they even went so far as to swear upon the Koran that they made no mental reservations and had no evil designs upon him. At last, overborne by the entreaties of those who surrounded him, and feeling certain furthermore that nothing he could do could avert his fate, he yielded.

Taking from his bosom a private token, he handed it to Kurshid's messenger.

"Go," he said, "give this to Selim, and the dragon will become a lamb."

It was as he said; at sight of the talisman, Selim prostrated himself, extinguished the match, and was at once stabbed to the heart. At the same time the garrison withdrew, the imperial flag was flung to the breeze, and the castle was occupied by the seraskier's troops, who filled the air with their acclamations.

It was then about noon. Ali upon the island was thoroughly disillusionized. His pulse was beating tumultuously, although no sign of his mental disturbance appeared upon his features. It was observed that he seemed at times to be deeply pre-occupied, that he yawned frequently, and kept passing his fingers through his beard. He took several draughts of coffee and iced water; he drew his watch time and again, and gazed through his telescope at the camp, the castles of Janina, the Pindus Mountains and the tranquil waters of the lake, one after another. Sometimes he glanced down at his weapons, and then his eyes gleamed with the fire of

youth and courage. His guards, standing at his sides, were preparing their cartridges, with their eyes riveted upon the approaches to the island.

The pavilion he occupied adjoined a wooden building supported upon columns like the theatres erected in the fields on public holidays. The women were confined in distant apartments. Everything was sombre and still. As his custom was, the vizier was sitting with his face toward the entrance, that he might be the first to descry anyone who might approach. At five o'clock he spied several boats coming toward the island, and soon after Hassan Pacha, Omer Briones, Mehemet, Kurshid's sword-bearer, the grand master of the wardrobe and several inferior officers stepped ashore followed by a numerous retinue, and approached the pavilion with a sombre air.

At sight of them Ali sprang impetuously to his feet, with his hand upon the pistol in his belt.

"Halt! What do you bring?" he shouted to Hassan in a voice of thunder.

"The will of his Highness; do you recognize these august characters?" and he showed him the glittering gold bespangled cover of the firman.

"I do, and I revere them."

"Submit then to your destiny; make your ablutions; pray to God and the Prophet; your head is demanded by——"

Ali did not let him finish.

"My head," he retorted savagely, "shall never fall like a slave's."

These words, rapidly uttered, were followed by a pistol-shot which wounded Hassan in the thigh. Quick as light Ali slew the master of the wardrobe, while his guards, firing into the crowd at the same time, laid low several *tchoadars*. The Osmanlis fled in terror from the

pavilion. Ali, when he found that the blood was flowing from a wound in his breast, roared like a wild bull. No one dared to face him in his fury, but they fired from all directions upon the pavilion. Four of his Palicares fell at his side. He knew not which way to turn; he heard his assailants under his feet, firing up through the floor on which he stood. He received a bullet in his side; another, fired from below, lodged in his spine; he staggered, caught at a window-frame for support, and fell upon a sofa.

"Run quickly," he cried to one of his *tchoadars*, "and kill poor Vasiliki, so that she may not be profaned by these vermin!"

The door flew open; all resistance was at an end. The Palicares leaped out through the windows. Kurshid's sword-bearer entered, followed by the executioners. Ali was still living.

"Let God's justice be done!" exclaimed a cadi.

At these words the executioners seized the outlaw by the beard, and dragged him under the peristyle, where they placed his head upon one of the stairs and hacked away with a dull cutlass until they separated it from the body. So died Ali-Pacha.

There was something so awe-inspiring and terrible about his expression, that the Osmanlis instinctively shuddered as they gazed upon his dead face. Kurshid, to whom the head was presented upon a large red platter, rose to receive it, bowed three times before it, and respectfully kissed the beard. He gave expression aloud to his wish to deserve a similar end, to such an extent did the admiration which Ali's marvelous courage inspired in these savages, cause them to overlook his crimes. He ordered the head to be embalmed with the most costly essences, preparatory to its being sent to

Constantinople, and he allowed the Skipetars to pay their last respects to their former master.

Never was grief known equal to that of the warlike Epirotes. Throughout the ensuing night the different Albanian tribes relieved one another watching over the body, upon which they improvised the most stirring funeral hymns.

At sunrise, Ali-Pacha's body, after it had been laved and prepared according to the established rites of the Mohammedan faith, was placed in a casket, which was wrapped about with rarest Indian cashmeres, and on which was laid a magnificent turban, adorned with the plumes which he wore in battle. They cut the mane of his war-horse, and put purple trappings upon him. His shield, his sword, his war-club, and his decorations were then fastened to the saddle-pommels of other led horses, and the procession moved toward the castle, while the soldiers shouted imprecations against the "son of the slave," an epithet which the Turks apply to the sultan in their popular outbreaks.

The *selaou-aga*, an officer, whose duty it is to superintend funeral ceremonies, acted as chief mourner, surrounded by weeping women who made the ruins of Janina resound with their lamentations. Guns were fired at long intervals. The portcullis of the castle was raised as the procession approached; the whole garrison were drawn up to receive it, and gave the military salute. The body was laid in a grave close by Emineh's. When the last shovelful of earth had been thrown into the grave, an imaum drew near to listen to the controversy supposed to ensue between the good and evil spirits, contending for the possession of the dead man; and when he announced that Ali Tepalen reposed in peace on the bosom of the celestial houris, the Skipetars

withdrew to their quarters, shuddering like the waves after a storm.

During the night, which the Skipetars devoted to singing, Kurshid had the head packed in a silver box and sent it secretly to Constantinople. His sword-bearer, Mehemet, who was entrusted with the duty of delivering it to the sultan, because he had presided at the execution, was escorted by three hundred Osmanlis. He was instructed to make all possible haste, and by daybreak was out of reach of the Arnauts, from whom a *coup de main* was apprehended.

The seraskier then ordered the unfortunate Vasiliki, whose life had been spared, to be brought before him. She fell at the knees of Ali's victorious foe, to implore him, not to spare her life, but to respect her chastity; and he reassured her by promising her the sultan's protection. She wept bitterly when she saw her husband's secretaries and treasurers and intendant loaded with chains. But sixty-five purses (twenty-five millions) had been discovered of all the vast treasure Ali possessed, and the torture had already been applied to his officers to force them to declare where the balance could be found. Dreading a similar fate, Vasiliki fell fainting into the arms of her maids, and was taken to the farm of Bonila, pending the decision of the Porte as to her fate.

Couriers were sent out in every direction to announce Ali's death, and as they were in advance of Mehemet's triumphal procession, he found as he approached Greveno the whole population of that town and the neighboring villages coming out to meet him, eager to see the Pacha of Janina's head. These men were unable to understand how it could have fallen, and they could hardly believe their eyes when it was taken from its box and shown to them. It was exposed to view in the house of the

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Mousselim Veli Aga all the time that the escort remained in the town, taking refreshment, and changing horses. As the public curiosity increased constantly as they rode along, they finally made a charge for gratifying it. The head of the mighty vizier, thus became an object of commerce, was exhibited from relay to relay, until Constantinople was reached; this was its last and greatest shame.

The appearance of this fatal head, which was exposed at the entrance of the imperial seraglio on February 23, and the birth of an heir presumptive to the sabre of Othman, which was announced simultaneously with the downfall of the great rebel by the guns of the seraglio, aroused a frenzy of enthusiasm among the military population of Constantinople. They greeted with shouts of triumph a placard attached to Ali's head, setting forth his crimes and the circumstances of his death, and concluding with these words: "AND THIS IS THE HEAD OF THE SAID TEPALEN ALI-PACHA, TRAITOR TO THE FAITH."

After dispatching magnificent gifts to Kurshid, and a bombastic general order for his army, Mahmond II. turned his eyes toward Asia Minor, where Ali's sons would doubtless have been forgotten in their exile, if they had not been supposed to possess great wealth. A sultan does not lower himself to parley with his slaves, when he can punish them with impunity, and so his Highness sent orders to put them to death.

Veli Pacha, who had as little courage as a woman reared in a harem, listened to his sentence on his knees. The dastard, who danced to gay music in his palace at Arta, while his innocent victims were being murdered, received the just reward of his crimes. In vain did he hug the knees of his executioners imploring them to put him to death in some secluded spot. He must have drained the cup of anguish to the dregs, when they

strangled before his eyes handsome Mehemet, his oldest son, and the gentle Selim, whose merit alone was sufficient to have obtained mercy for his family, if destiny had not decreed its extermination. At last, after witnessing the death of his brother Salik Pacha, Ali's beloved son, whom a Georgian slave had borne him in his old age, Veli, weeping bitterly, bent his guilty head to his executioners.

The women were then seized in turn. Poor Zobeide, whose scandalous experience had become known at Constantinople, was sewn in a leather bag, and thrown into the Pursak, a river which mingles its waters with those of the Sagaris. Katherine, Veli's other wife, and all the daughters he had had by all his wives, were hauled to the bazar, and sold to Turcoman shepherds. The avengers at once proceeded to gather in the spoils of their victims.

Mouktar-Pacha's affair was not adjusted so peaceably. With a pistol-shot he stretched the *capidgi-bachi*, who ventured to exhibit the bowstring to him, lifeless at his feet.

"Villain!" he cried, roaring like a bull which has escaped the axe, "an Arnaut doesn't die like a eunuch; I am Tepalen's son! To arms, comrades! they mean to murder us!"

As he spoke he threw himself upon the Osmanlis, dagger in hand, drove them back, and succeeded in barricading himself in his apartment. A detachment of janissaries of Khoutayeh were ordered to the spot with a cannon, and a stubborn fight ensued. The slight barricade which sheltered the gallant fellows was utterly demolished. Old Metche-bono, Elmas Bey's father, who did not waver in his fidelity, was shot dead; and Mouktar, after he had cut down a host of his foes, and seen all his own adherents perish by his side, being himself

riddled with wounds, set fire to the powder stored in his palace, and breathed his last, leaving nothing for the sultan save a heap of ashes and ruins; an enviable death, compared to those of his father and brother, who died by the executioner's hand.

The heads of Ali's children and grandchildren were taken to Constantinople and exposed at the entrance of the seraglio, where they aroused the wonder of the multitude. The sultan himself struck by the great beauty of Mehemet and Selim, whose long, drooping eyelashes gave them the appearance of two youths peacefully sleeping, could not restrain his emotion.

"I supposed," he said stupidly, "that they were as old as their father." And he expressed regret that he had condemned them.

MALLEFILLE.

La Comtesse de Saint-Géran.

LA COMTESSE DE SAINT-GÉRAN

On a certain day toward the close of the year 1639 a party of horsemen arrived about noon in a small village located at the extremity of Auvergne nearest Paris. The country people collected at the hubbub and recognized the provost of the *maré chaussée* and his posse. It was excessively hot, the horses were dripping with sweat, and their riders covered with dust, having evidently just returned from an important expedition. A man rode out from the escort and asked an old woman who was knitting at her door if there was not an inn in the neighborhood. The woman and her children pointed out a bunch of boxwood hanging above a door at the end of the only street in the village, and the escort rode on at a foot-pace. The bystanders thereupon noticed among them a young man of attractive appearance and richly dressed, who seemed to be a prisoner. This discovery redoubled the curiosity of the peasants, who followed the cavalcade to the door of the cabaret. The host came forward, cap in hand, and the provost asked him with an air of authority, if his hovel was large enough to accommodate his party, men and horses. The host replied that he had the best wine in the country to give the king's men, and that it would be easy to collect enough bedding and fodder for their horses in the neighborhood. The provost listened to these fine promises with a dubious air, but gave the necessary

orders, and slipped down from his horse, with an oath wrung from him by the heat and his fatigue. The horsemen formed in close order about the young man; one of them held his stirrup, and the provost stood aside deferentially to allow him to pass first into the hostelry. There was no further doubt that he was a prisoner of high rank, and all sorts of conjectures passed from mouth to mouth. The men would have it that some great crime had been committed, while the women, on the other hand, insisted that so well-favored a youth must be innocent of wrong-doing.

Within the cabaret all was excitement; the waiters were running from cellar to garret, the host swearing, and sending his servants around among the neighbors, and the hostess scolding her daughter, who stood with her face glued to the window of one of the lower rooms, staring at the handsome youth.

There were two tables in the principal room of the establishment. The provost appropriated the first, and left the other for the soldiers, who went out, one after another, to groom their horses under a shed in the farmyard; then he motioned the prisoner to a seat and sat down opposite him, rapping upon the table with his heavy cane.

"Ouf!" he exclaimed, with a groan indicative of weariness, "I pray you, forgive the wretched wine, monsieur le marquis."

The young man smiled pleasantly.

"A fig for the wine, monsieur le prevôt," he said, "but I confess that I am sorry to stop on the road, much as I delight in your society; I am eager to put an end to my absurd situation, and I long to reach the end of our journey, and stop the foolish business at once."

The host's daughter was standing by the table with a pewter pot she had just brought in, and at these words she looked up into the prisoner's face with a confident expression which seemed to say: "I knew he was innocent."

"After all," continued the marquis, as he put the glass to his lips, "this wine isn't so bad as you think, Monsieur le prevôt."

He turned to the girl, who was gazing at his gloves and his ruff.

"Your good health, my pretty child," he said.

"In that case," rejoined the provost, amazed at his nonchalant air, "I will beg you to pardon the lodgings."

"What!" exclaimed the marquis, "do we sleep here?"

"Monsieur," said the provost, "we have sixteen long leagues before us, our horses are done up, and for my own part I confess that I am worth no more than my horse."

The marquis brought his hand down heavily upon the table, and gave every indication of violent chagrin. The provost, meanwhile, was breathing laboriously, stretching out his legs, and wiping his forehead with his handkerchief. He was a stout, red-faced fellow, of the build that can endure but little fatigue.

"Monsieur le Marquis," he continued, "although your society, to repay your civility in kind, is very precious to me, you cannot doubt that I prefer to enjoy it under different circumstances. If it is in your power, as you claim, to extricate yourself from the grasp of the law, I am desirous that you should do so as soon as possible. But I beg you to consider the state we are in. As for myself, I am absolutely unable to sit an hour

longer in the saddle to-day; and are you not yourself overdone by this forced march in the intense heat?"

"Yes, I am," said the marquis, letting his arms fall by his side.

"Well, then, let us rest; we will take supper here, if we can, and start again, refreshed, in the cool air of the morning."

"So be it," rejoined the marquis; "but let us at least pass the time like men. I have two pistoles left; let these good fellows have them to buy wine. It is no more than right that they should drink at my expense, when I am giving them so much trouble."

He tossed two pieces of silver upon the other table, whereupon the soldiers shouted in chorus: "Vive Monsieur le Marquis!" The provost left the room to station the sentries, and then visited the kitchen, where he ordered the best supper that could be had. Dice were produced and the troopers began to play and drink. The marquis stood in the middle of the room, humming a villanelle, stroking his moustache, turning upon his heel, and looking stealthily on this side and on that; he drew a purse softly from the pocket of his small-clothes, and as the host's daughter was going in and out he threw his arms around her neck as if to kiss her, and whispered in her ear, slipping ten louis into her hand:

"The key of my chamber-door, and two pints of wine to the sentries, and you will save my life."

The girl retreated to the door, where she turned and with a very expressive glance nodded affirmatively. The provost returned, and two hours later the supper was served. He ate and drank like a man who was more at home at table than in the saddle. The marquis did not let the bottle stand, and under the combined influence of drowsiness, and the fumes of a very heady

little wine, the provost kept repeating from time to time, with half-shut eyes:

"*Morbleu!* Monsieur le Marquis, I can't believe that you're so great a villain as they say; you seem to me like a very good fellow."

The marquis believed him to be nearly dead drunk, and was making love to the daughter of the house, when, to his great chagrin, came bed-time; the provost called the sergeant and gave him his instructions in a low voice, then announced aloud that he should have the honor of escorting M. le Marquis to his bedroom, and that he should not retire himself until he had performed that duty. He ordered three of his men to attend them with torches, made a thorough examination of the room assigned to the prisoner, and left him with profuse expressions of respect.

The marquis threw himself upon the bed without removing his boots just as the clock struck nine. He heard the soldiers going and coming in the stables and the yard.

But, as everyone was tired out, an hour later all was still. The prisoner thereupon rose softly, and felt on the chimney-piece and all the furniture, and even among the sheets, for the key which he hoped to find there. He failed to find it. He was not mistaken, however, as to the young girl's tender interest, and he could not believe that she had made sport of him. The room he occupied had a window looking on the street, and a door opening upon a wretched wooden gallery, which played at being a balcony, and from which a staircase led down to the common rooms of the establishment. This gallery overlooked the courtyard, at the same height as the window. The marquis had only to leap down from one or the other. He had been deliberating for some time,

and had almost determined to jump into the street at the risk of breaking his neck, when he heard two soft raps upon his door. He started, and hastened to open the door, saying to himself: "I am saved." A shadow glided into the room; the girl was trembling in every limb, and could not speak until the marquis reassured her with his caresses.

"Ah! Monsieur," she said, "I am lost if we are discovered."

"True," said the marquis, "but your fortune is made if you help me to escape."

"God is my witness that I would do it with all my soul if I could; but I have such bad news——"

She lost control of her voice in her excitement, and stopped. The poor child had come with bare feet, lest she should make a noise, and she seemed to be shivering.

"What is it?" the marquis asked, impatiently.

"Before he went to bed," she continued, "M. le Prevôt sent to my father for all the keys of the house, and made him swear that he had no others. My father gave them all to him; more than that, there is a soldier on guard at every door; but they are very tired, I heard them muttering, and I gave them more wine than you said."

"They will go to sleep," said the marquis without discouragement, "and it's great good luck that they did my rank the honor of not locking me into this room."

"There's a kitchen garden," continued the girl, "toward the fields, with nothing but trellis-work around it, which isn't very solid; but——"

"Where's my horse?"

"Under the shed, I suppose with the others."

"I am going to jump down into the yard."

"You will kill yourself."

"So much the better!"

"Why, what have you done, Monsieur le Marquis?" said the girl sorrowfully.

"Mere foolishness! almost nothing; but still my head and my honor are involved. Let us waste no time, for my mind is made up."

"Wait," said the girl, grasping his arm, "in the left-hand corner of the yard there is a great heap of straw, and the gallery runs out over it——."

"Splendid! I shall make less noise there, and be less likely to injure myself."

He strode toward the door, the girl still trying to detain him, without knowing what she was doing; but he shook off her hand, and opened the door. The moon was shining brightly in the yard; he heard no sound. He walked to the end of the wooden rail, and could see the dung-heap, which was of sufficient height. The girl crossed herself. The marquis listened once more but heard nothing. He stepped upon the rail, and was about to jump, when by a miracle of good fortune he heard, just in time, the murmur of deep voices. They were those of the soldiers, resuming their conversation as they passed the bottle. The marquis held his breath as he crept back to his door where the girl was awaiting him.

"I told you that it was too early," she whispered.

"Haven't you a knife to cut those rascals' throats?"

"Wait an hour, I entreat, just an hour," pleaded the girl; "by that time they will all be asleep."

Her voice was so sweet, and she held out her arms to him so imploringly that the marquis waited, and when the hour had gone, it was the girl who urged his departure.

The marquis pressed his lips a last time upon those

which were still innocent of wrong the day before, then half opened the door, and this time could hear nothing but dogs barking in the distance. He leaned over the rail, and could see a soldier lying face downward on the straw.

"Suppose they should wake up?" whispered the girl, piteously.

"In any event, they will not take me alive, never fear," said the marquis.

"Adieu then," she rejoined, sobbing, "and may heaven guard you!"

He stepped over the rail, jumped and fell heavily upon the dung-heap.

The girl saw him run to the shed, hastily untie the horse, leap upon his back, drive in his spurs, gallop behind a stable and through the kitchen garden, run his horse at the fence, overturn it, ride over it, and reach the high road across the fields.

The poor child stood at the end of the gallery with her eyes fixed upon the trooper, ready to vanish at his slightest movement. The clatter of horses' hoofs upon the stones, half awakened him. He rose and went to the shed, suspecting some surprise. His horse was gone; the marquis in his haste had taken the first that came to hand, and it happened to be this particular trooper's. He at once gave the alarm, and awoke his comrades. They ran to the prisoner's room and found it empty. The provost leaped out of bed, half awake. The prisoner had escaped.

The girl, who pretended to have been aroused by the noise, retarded the preparations by mislaying the bridles, and bothering the soldiers in every way under pretence of assisting them; nevertheless the whole troop was on the high road within a quarter of an hour. The provost

was swearing like a pirate. The best horses led the way, and the sentry, who was on the marquis' horse and was more eager than the others to get his hands upon the prisoner, was far in advance; next behind him was the sergeant, also well mounted. As they could see by the break in the hedge in which direction the marquis had fled, they were soon in sight of him, but a long distance behind. The marquis constantly lost ground, however, for the horse he had taken was the very worst of the lot, and he had urged him beyond his powers. He turned his head and saw that the soldiers were within half a gun-shot; he urged his beast more and more, tearing his flanks with the spurs, until at last he came to the end of his breath, and fell. The marquis rolled over in the dust with him; but as he fell he clutched the holsters and found that they were provided with pistols. He lay motionless beside the horse, as if he had swooned, a loaded pistol in each hand. The sentry, who was mounted upon the marquis' own horse, which was a valuable beast, was more than two hundred yards in front of his officer; as he rode up, and before he had time to adopt any defensive measures, the marquis sprang to his feet and put a bullet through his brain. The soldier fell; the marquis sprang to the saddle without touching a stirrup, and galloped off like the wind, leaving the sergeant fifty yards behind, dumfounded at what had taken place before his eyes.

The rest of the escort galloped up, thinking that he was taken, and the provost shouted till he was hoarse, "Do not kill him!" But they found only the sergeant, trying to resuscitate his trooper, who was stone dead, with a fractured skull.

The marquis was out of sight; to avoid further pursuit, he had struck into the fields, and he rode at full

speed for a good hour. When he was almost sure that he had thrown his pursuers off the scent, and that their wretched horses could not overtake him, he determined to halt and give his mount a much-needed rest; he was going at a foot pace through a narrow road, when he met a peasant. He inquired of him the road to the Bourbonnais, and tossed him a crown. The man took the crown and pointed out the road; but he seemed hardly to know what he was saying, and stared at the marquis in a curious way. The marquis called to him to go his way, but the peasant remained standing at the side of the road without taking a step. The marquis rode threateningly toward him, and asked him why he persisted in staring at him in that insolent fashion.

"Why," said the peasant, "you have——." And he pointed to his shoulder and his ruff.

The marquis looked down at himself, and saw that his doublet was all smeared with blood, which, added to the disordered state of his clothing, and the dust with which he was covered, gave him a decidedly unpromising appearance.

"I know what it is," he said; "my valet and I were separated in an encounter with some drunken Germans; we had a brisk little scuffle, and, whether I got a scratch myself, or in clinching one of the rascals I let a little of his blood, this is the result of our adventure. At all events I feel no ill effects."

As he spoke he made a show of feeling all over his body.

"However," he resumed, "I should be glad of an opportunity to clean myself up a little; I am dead with thirst and heat, too, and my horse came out of the affair in little better condition than myself. Do you know where I can find a place to rest?"

The peasant offered to take him to his own house, which was near at hand. A woman and children who were at work inside the house rose respectfully and went to fetch what he needed—wine and water, fruit and a large slice of black bread. The marquis cleansed his doublet and drank a glass of wine, and meanwhile questioned his hosts with apparent indifference. He inquired once more as to the different roads leading to the Bourbonnais, where he was going, he said, to see a relative; as to the villages and cross-roads, and the distances; then he spoke of the neighborhood and the harvest, and asked for the latest news.

On this point the peasant remarked that it was surprising that he should have had such an encounter on the high road, because they must have been in the immediate vicinity of a detachment of the *maré chaussée*, which had just made an important capture.

"Of whom, pray?" queried the marquis.

"Oh!" said the peasant, "a nobleman who has done a vast amount of harm in the province."

"What! a nobleman in the hands of justice?"

"Yes, indeed! and who's likely to leave his head there."

"Do you know what he has done?"

"It's enough to make one shudder; outrageous things; his score's a heavy one. The whole province is in a ferment."

"Do you know him?"

"No, but we all have his description."

As there was little comfort for him in this intelligence, the marquis, after some further conversation, went out to look at his horse, patted him encouragingly, tossed more money to the peasant, and disappeared in the direction pointed out to him.

The provost rode along the road half a league or more; but he soon concluded that the pursuit was hopeless, so he dispatched one of his men to his headquarters to cause new orders to be issued throughout the province, and returned with the others to the village from which the escape was made. The marquis had relatives in the neighborhood, and it was reasonable to suppose that he might return and seek shelter with them. The whole village came out to meet the soldiers, who were compelled to confess that the handsome prisoner had got the better of them. The peasants looked at the affair in diverse ways, and the excitement was intense.

The provost returned to the inn, where he threw the furniture about, and vented his ill-humor upon all alike. The host's daughter, who was at first painfully anxious, could hardly conceal her joy.

The provost spread his papers out upon the table as if to feed his spleen with the sight of them.

"The greatest rascal unhung!" he cried; "I ought to have expected it."

"His manners were so gentle!" said the hostess.

"A consummate villain! Do you know who he is? He's the Marquis de Saint-Maixent!"

"The Marquis de Saint-Maixent!" they cried, in horror.

"Yes, to be sure," retorted the provost, "the Marquis de Saint-Maixent, accused, and practically convicted, of counterfeiting and sorcery."

"Ah!"

"Convicted of the crime of incest."

"*Mon Dieu!*"

"Convicted of having his wife strangled, so that he might marry another woman, whose husband he had planned to murder."

"Heaven help us!"

Everyone in the room crossed himself.

"Yes, good people," continued the enraged provost, "that's the darling that has escaped from the king's officers!"

The daughter of the house left the room, for her self-control was leaving her.

"Is there no hope of catching him?" asked the host.

"Very little, if he's gone to the Bourbonnais; for I think that in that province he has relatives among the nobility, who won't let him be taken."

The fugitive was, in fact, no other than the Marquis de Saint-Maixent, who was accused of all the horrible crimes detailed by the provost, and whose audacious flight made it possible for him to take an active part in the strange events we are about to describe.

About a fortnight after this occurrence, a horseman rang at the outer gate of the château of Saint-Géran in the outskirts of Moulins. It was late, and the servants were in no hurry to respond to his summons. The stranger rang a second peal after the manner of one who had a right to enter, and at last spied a man running down the avenue. When he reached the gate he peered through the bars, and, making out with difficulty in the dim light that he who rang was a traveler in decided disarray, with a dilapidated hat, dusty clothes, and no sword, asked him what he wanted. The stranger replied sharply that he wanted to see the Comte de Saint-Géran, and bade him be quick. The servant replied that it was impossible, whereat the other lost his temper.

"Who are you?" inquired the man in livery.

"Rascal!" cried the horseman, "you are tremendously particular. Go and tell M. de Saint-Géran that his kinsman, the Marquis de Saint-Maixent, would like to see him at once."

The valet with profuse apologies opened the gate. He went on ahead of the marquis, sending other servants to hold his stirrup, and hurried off to announce his arrival to his master. Supper was just about to be served when the news reached the count's ears; he ran at once to greet the marquis, embraced him again and again, and gave him a most cordial and friendly welcome. He would have hauled him off to the dining-room to present him to the whole family, but the marquis called his attention to the condition of his clothing, and at the same time begged him to grant him a few moments' conversation in private. The count took him to his own room, where he fitted him out from head to foot with his own clothes; while he was dressing, they conversed.

What sort of a fable the marquis told him concerning the charges against himself no one knows, but it is certain that the count did not abate his manifestations of regard for his kinsman, and from that hour the marquis could be sure of a refuge at the château of Saint-Géran. When his toilet was completed, he followed the count, who presented him to the countess and the rest of his family.

It will be convenient at this point to introduce the reader to the then inmates of the château, and give some account of anterior events for the better understanding of what is to follow.

The Maréchal de Saint-Géran, of the illustrious family of La Guiche, and governor of the Bourbonnais, was first married to Anne de Tournon, who had by him Claude de La Guiche, and a daughter, who married the Marquis de Bouillé. Upon his wife's death he married Suzanne-aux-Épaules, who was also then married for the second time, having been the wife of the deceased Comte de Longaunay, by whom she had Suzanne de Longaunay.

The marshal and Suzanne-aux-Épaules, in order to place the children of their earlier ventures upon an equal footing, resolved to join their hands in marriage, and thus cement their own union by an additional bond. Claude de La Guiche, the marshal's son, married Suzanne de Longaunay.

This step was taken to the sore discomfiture of the Marquise de Bouillé, the marshal's daughter, who lived with her mother-in-law, and was unhappily mated with a man who gave her serious grounds of complaint, so she said, the principal being that he was a septuagenarian.

The marriage contract of Claude de La Guiche and Suzanne de Longaunay was executed at Rouen on the seventh of February, 1619; but the extreme youth of the bridegroom, who was but eighteen, led to his being sent away to travel in Italy. He returned after two years, and the marriage turned out very happily in every respect except that it was not blessed with children. The countess could not endure the thought that her barrenness might cause an illustrious name to die out, and a noble family to become extinct. She made vows and pilgrimages; she consulted doctors and empirics, but all to no purpose.

The Maréchal de Saint-Géran died on the thirtieth of December, 1632, regretting to the last that he had no descendants in the second generation. His son, created Comte de Saint-Géran, succeeded his father in the post of governor of the Bourbonnais, and was installed as chevalier of the king's orders of knighthood.

At this juncture the Marquise de Bouillé broke the bond that bound her to the old marquis, by a divorce that caused much scandal, and came to live at the château of Saint-Géran, thoroughly reconciled to her

brother's marriage, for as he had no other heir than herself, all his property would revert to her.

Such was the condition of affairs when the Marquis de Saint-Maixent made his appearance at the château. He was young and well-favored and very crafty; he was a great favorite with the ladies, and won the heart of the old Maréchale de Saint-Géran, who made her home with her children. He soon became well assured that he could come to an understanding with the Marquise de Bouillé.

The Marquis de Saint-Maixent's fortune was sadly depleted by extravagance and dissipation, and by his conflict with the officers of the law; indeed, it was practically eaten up. The marchioness was the count's heiress-presumptive; he fancied that she would soon lose her husband—in any case the life of an old man of seventy was not likely to stand in the way of a man like the marquis; he could then persuade the marchioness to marry him, and thus come into possession of the finest property in the province.

He at once began to pay his court to her, but in such a way as to avert suspicion. It was very difficult, however, to make himself understood by the marchioness, without betraying himself to third persons. But she was prepossessed in his favor by his agreeable exterior, and quickly grasped his meaning; and her unhappy marriage and the notoriety of a scandalous divorce trial, left her with but a weak defence against his enterprise. They had, however, very few opportunities to meet in private. The countess, wholly unsuspicious, was present at all their interviews; the count frequently took the marquis away to hunt, and the days passed *en famille*. M. de Saint-Maixent had as yet said nothing that a virtuous woman might not pretend not to hear, and the

intrigue, notwithstanding the fertility in expedients of the marquis' brain, dragged its slow length along.

The countess, after twenty years of barrenness, had not ceased to hope that her prayers that she might present her husband with a son would some day be granted. After long hesitation she resorted to all sorts of charlatans, who in those days had some credit among people of condition. At one time she sent to Italy for a sort of astrologer, who almost poisoned her with some horrible drug, and whom they were obliged to send back post-haste to his own country; he should have esteemed himself very fortunate to get off so easily. This transaction called forth grave remonstrances from Madame de Saint-Géran's confessor, and at last, as time passed, she accustomed herself to the terrible thought that she might never have a child, and sought consolation in religion. The count, whose affection for her showed no signs of diminution, no longer reckoned upon having a direct heir, and made his will upon that theory. The hopes of the Marquise de Bouillé were thereby changed to certainty, and M. de Saint-Maixent, being relieved from all doubts on that score, was devoting himself exclusively to the prosecution of his designs upon her, when the Comte de Saint-Géran, in the latter part of November, 1640, was unexpectedly obliged to go to Paris in great haste.

The countess, who could not endure separation from her husband, proposed to accompany him. The marquis, overjoyed at the prospect of being left almost alone at the château with Madame de Bouillé, described the attractions of Paris in the most glowing colors, and did his utmost to persuade her to go. The marchioness, too, manœuvred slyly to the same end, and their combined efforts were more than sufficient. It was decided that

the countess should go with M. de Saint-Géran. She made her preparations in a very short time, and they started within a few days.

The marquis was no longer afraid to manifest his passion, and he had no difficulty in making a complete conquest of Madame de Bouillé; he affected the most ardent love for her, and she responded in the same vein. They were always together, walking or driving, and always kept the servants at a distance; they passed whole days in some retired corner of the park, or in Madame de Bouillé's apartments. It was impossible that their conduct should not finally cause gossip among a whole army of servants, against whom they had to be constantly on their guard, and that was what did happen.

The marchioness was soon compelled therefore to purchase the silence of the Quinet sisters, her maids, which she had but little difficulty in doing, as they were very devoted to her. It was the beginning of Madame de Bouillé's shame, and the first downward step for these creatures of hers, who were doomed to be irresistibly drawn on to participation in the blackest of plots.

There was at the château a tall, thin, unhealthy looking fellow, of very limited mental capacity, with just enough intelligence to execute, if not to plan, any evil deed, who held a heavy hand upon the whole domestic establishment. He was a simple peasant, whom the marshal had condescended to take in, and whom the count had promoted step by step to the office of *maître d'hôtel* because of his long service in the household, and because he had always seen him there from his boyhood. He preferred not to take him with him to Paris, lest he should prove to be out of touch with the methods of service in vogue there, but left him behind to oversee

his establishment. The marquis took him aside, sounded him discreetly, turned his head by flattery and by giving him money, and took possession of him, body and soul.

These divers agents undertook to cut short the gossip of the servants' hall, and thenceforward the lovers were able to pursue their *liaison* without circumspection.

One evening as M. de Saint-Maixent and the marchioness were taking supper together, there was a loud ringing at the gate of the château, followed by some stir in the courtyard to which they paid little attention. It was a courier, who had come at full speed from Paris with a letter from the Comte de Saint-Géran for the marquis. He was announced and shown into the room where they were, followed by almost the whole household. The marquis demanded an explanation of their forwardness, and waved his hand as a sign to the servants to leave the room, but the courier explained that the count desired the letter to be read before them all. The marquis thereupon opened it without replying, ran his eyes over it, and read it aloud without the slightest tremor in his voice. The count announced to his dear relatives and to his household that the countess had exhibited unmistakable symptoms of pregnancy; that she had no sooner arrived at Paris than she was taken with fainting-fits, nausea and vomiting, that she welcomed with the keenest delight these ailments which gave promise of her becoming a mother, and that her condition was no longer doubtful to the physicians or to anybody else; that, as for himself, his joy knew no bounds, for it was the consummation of all his prayers; that he desired that rejoicings at the happy event should be at once inaugurated at the château, he added that the letter would precede them by a few days only, and that he proposed to bring the countess

in a litter for greater safety. Then followed instructions as to certain sums of money to be distributed among the servants.

The servants fairly shouted for joy; the marquis and the marchioness exchanged but one look, but that look eloquently expressed their dismay. They controlled their feelings, however, so far as to pretend great satisfaction, and the marquis even complimented the servants upon their attachment to their masters. The lovers were then left alone, with very sober faces, while violins and fireworks held sway under their windows. For some time they said nothing. The first thought of each of them was that the count and countess had allowed themselves to be misled by symptoms as common as they were unimportant, that those about them were seeking to flatter their hopes, that it was impossible that a human organization should so give itself the lie after twenty years, and that there was nothing in this supposed pregnancy. This opinion gained strength upon reflection, and restored their calmness in some degree.

The next day they were walking side by side in a secluded path in the park, discussing the probabilities of their situation. M. de Saint-Maixent impressed upon the marchioness the immense injury that would be done her by such an event; he went on to say that, even if the news were true, there were still many dangerous obstacles to pass. It was necessary that no accident should happen to the countess, and that her *accouchement* should be safely accomplished.

"The child may die," he said at last. And he let fall some sinister words as to the trifling harm that would be done by the destruction of a wretched creature, without intelligence and of no possible consequence, "*a mere handful of ill-organized matter*," and

which took the trouble to be born for no other purpose than to cause the ruin of an estimable person like the marchioness.

"But what's the use of worrying about it?" he added impatiently; "the countess is not *enceinte;* she cannot be."

A gardener at work in the park heard this part of the conversation, but as they were walking away from him he heard nothing more.

A few days later, some men rode into the courtyard, sent forward by the count to announce his speedy arrival. They were, in fact, closely followed by vans and carriages, and at last came the countess' litter with M. de Saint-Géran riding by the door, which he had not once quitted throughout the journey. They received a triumphal reception; all the peasants had left their work, and filled the air with acclamations; the servants ran out to meet their mistress, and the oldest among them wept for joy to see the count so joyous, and to think that his noble qualities were to be perpetuated in a son and heir. The Marquis de Saint-Maixent and Madame de Bouillé did their best to rise to the general level of rejoicing.

Madame la Maréchale de Saint-Géran hastened to the castle the same day; she too was unable to believe in the glad news, but had the pleasure of being convinced of its truth when she felt for herself the movement of the long-desired child.

The count and countess were much beloved in the Bourbonnais, and the intelligence caused general satisfaction there, especially in those families which were allied to them by blood, and these were very numerous. Soon after their return to the castle, more than twenty ladies of quality came to express their satisfaction and

deep interest. All of these ladies, on more than one occasion, felt the child moving in its mother's body, and several of them gratified the countess by playfully assuming the rôle of prophetess, and predicting that she would give birth to a boy. Her shape and the presence of all the ordinary symptoms, well-marked, left no doubt as to her condition, and all the doctors in the neighborhood were agreed concerning it. The count kept one of the doctors at the château for two months, and spoke to M. de Saint-Maixent of his purpose to secure a reliable midwife upon the same conditions. The maréchale, who was to have the privilege of naming the child, ordered at great expense a magnificent supply of linen, which she proposed to present to the new-comer.

The marchioness swallowed her chagrin, and among all these joy-blinded people, not one remarked the indications of the poison that was brewing in her heart. She saw the marquis every day, and he constantly fanned her discontent, and embittered her still more, by repeating that the count and countess were exulting in the ruin of her hopes, and hinting that they were scheming to produce a spurious heir, in order to disinherit her. He had begun, as is customary in private as well as in public life, by corrupting the thoughts of the marchioness, and turning her away from religion, in order to prepare her mind for the commission of crime. He was one of those libertines very rare in that age (which was less benighted than is sometimes claimed) who had at their tongue's end the last deliverance of science bearing upon atheism. It is worthy of remark that the great criminals of those days, Sainte-Croix for example, and Exili, the scowling poisoner, were the leading unbelievers, and that they were far in advance of the savants of the following century in philosophy as

well as in the investigation of physical science, to which they resorted first of all in quest of poisons. Passion, self-interest, and hatred fought on the marquis' side in Madame de Bouillé's heart, and she gave her assent to whatever he chose to undertake.

The Marquis de Saint-Maixent had a servant of his own, a clever, audacious rascal, whom he had sent for from his own estate, a confidential valet befitting such a master; for some time he had employed him on secret commissions in the neighborhood of Saint-Géran.

One evening as the marquis was about to retire, this man returned from one of his expeditions, and went to his bedroom, where he remained a long while. He informed his master that he had at last found what he sought, and handed him a slip of paper containing certain names of persons and places.

The next morning at daybreak, the marquis ordered two of his horses to be saddled, pretended that he had been summoned home on important business, said that he might be absent three or four days, and rode off at full speed with his valet, requesting that his apologies should be presented to the count when he came down.

They lay that night in a hostelry on the road to Auvergne, in order to mislead anybody who might have chanced to recognize them; the next day they followed divers cross-roads and by-ways, and two days later reached a large village which they were supposed to have left far away on their left hand.

In the outskirts of the village dwelt a woman who carried on the profession of midwife, and was known as such in the neighborhood, but who was said to have mysterious and revolting secrets to disclose to those who paid her well. However that might be she had cleverly availed herself of the influence her skill gave her over

credulous people. According to her clients, she cured the king's evil, composed philters and love potions, assisted young women of good family out of their difficulties, took a hand in intrigues, and even dabbled in sorcery for the behoof of country bumpkins. She had managed so cleverly that she was scarcely known in these various capacities except by unfortunate creatures, who were as deeply interested as she in maintaining the most profound secrecy and as she insisted upon being paid in gold she lived in comfortable ease in a house belonging to herself, and quite alone, for greater convenience. For the rest she enjoyed a good reputation in her profession, and was esteemed by many prominent people. Her name was Louise Goillard.

As she was sitting by herself one evening, just after curfew, there was a vigorous knocking at her door. Being accustomed to receive visits at all hours of the night she took her lamp, unsuspectingly, and opened the door. An armed man leaped into the hall, apparently in great excitement. Louise Goillard was so terrified that she fell into a chair. The man was the Marquis de Saint-Maixent.

"Have no fear, my good woman," said the stranger, gasping for breath; "have no fear, I beg you; it's my place to be alarmed, not yours. I am no doer of evil, and instead of you having anything to fear at my hands, I come to implore your assistance."

He threw his cloak down in a corner, unbuckled his belt, and laid aside his sword.

"Allow me first of all to rest a moment," he said, sinking into a chair.

He wore a traveling suit; but, although he gave no name, Louise Goillard saw at a glance that he was very far from being what she feared, but that it was, on the

other hand, a fine gentleman, whom her good luck had brought to her door.

"I pray you pardon a fear which did you great wrong," she said. "You came in so suddenly that I had no time to see whom I had to deal with. My house is a little isolated; I am alone, and some one might take advantage of my position to injure a poor woman, who stands in no need of ill fortune. The times are so hard! You seem fatigued, will you have some salts to inhale?"

"Give me just a glass of water, please."

The woman went into the adjoining room, and returned with a jug. The marquis pretended to moisten his lips, and said:

"I come from a great distance on most important business; be sure that I will pay you handsomely for your services."

He put his hand in his pocket and took out a purse and rolled it about between his fingers.

"In the first place," he said, "you must pledge yourself to absolute secrecy."

"There is no need of that with us," said Louise Goillard; "it's the first condition of our trade."

"I must have a more explicit guaranty than that—your oath not to reveal what I am about to confide to you to anyone on earth."

"I will give you my word then, since you exact it, but I tell you again that it's useless; you don't know me."

"Consider that events of the utmost gravity are involved, that it is as if I were to place my life in your hands, and that I would rather die a thousand deaths than see this mystery revealed."

"And do you consider," said the woman good-humoredly, "that we are ourselves most deeply interested in keeping the secrets entrusted to us, for an indiscretion

on our part would deprive us of the confidence of our clients, and that there are cases—You can speak."

With this mutual understanding the marquis began:

"I know that you are a very skillful woman."

"Indeed, I would like to be, in order to serve you."

"I know that you have carried the study of your profession as far as it can be carried."

"It may be that your humble servant has been overpraised."

"And that your investigations have disclosed to you a way to read the future."

"That is nonsense."

"It is true; I have been told so."

"You have been deceived."

"Why do you deny it, and refuse so soon to help me?"

Louise Goillard demurred for a long while; she did not understand how a man of his rank could put any faith in the tricks of divination which she employed only with the common people and rich farmers; but the marquis was so eager and persistent that she hardly knew what to think.

"Hark ye," he said, "it's useless to pretend with me, for I know all. Set your mind at rest; we are playing a game in which you stand to win a thousand for one; and here is something, too, to atone for my importunity."

He placed a roll of gold pieces upon the table. The midwife falteringly confessed that she had sometimes experimented with astrological combinations, not always successfully, and that she had been led to do it solely by phenomena that she had noticed in the practice of her profession. The secret of her guilty practices was driven into its last retrenchments.

"If this be true," said the marquis, "you must be aware of my situation already; you must know that I have

been carried so far by a mad, blind passion, that I have betrayed an old gentleman's confidence, and violated the laws of hospitality by seducing his daughter in her own house; that affairs have come to a crisis, and the noble girl, whom I love to distraction, is *enceinte*, and on the point of losing her honor, perhaps her life, by the discovery of her fault, which is really mine only."

The woman replied that it was impossible to learn anything about any person without a special investigation; and the better to dazzle the marquis, she produced a sort of box covered with figures and curious marks.

She opened it, and after combining certain figures which were inside, she admitted that the marquis was in a truly lamentable situation. She added, with the purpose of terrifying him, that he was threatened by disasters even greater than those he had already experienced, but that it was an easy matter to foresee and avert them by further consultations.

"Madame," he rejoined, "there is but one thing in the world which I dread, and that is the dishonor of the woman I love. Is there no way of avoiding the ordinary embarrassment attending an *accouchement*?"

"I know of none," said the midwife.

"The young lady has succeeded in concealing her condition, and it would be an easy matter to deliver her without publicity?"

"She has already risked her life, and I will not consent to meddle in the affair for fear of accident."

"For instance," said the marquis, "could not the pain be done away with?"

"As to that I cannot say, and even if I knew of any way to accomplish it, I would take good care not to attempt any method which would interfere with the due course of nature."

"You are deceiving me; you do know this method, and you put it in practice upon a certain person whom I could name."

"Who dares to slander me so? I do nothing except in accordance with the precepts of the regular faculties. God forbid that I should set all the doctors to throwing stones at me, and perhaps be driven from France!"

"Do you mean then to leave me to die of despair? If I were capable of making an improper use of your secrets, I could have done so already, for I know them. In God's name, dissemble no more, and tell me how it is possible to do away with the pains of childbirth? Do you want more money? There it is."

He placed several more louis upon the table.

"Wait a moment," said the woman; "it may be that there is a way, which I have discovered and never used, but which I believe to be efficacious."

"But if you have never used it, it may be dangerous, and may imperil the life of the woman I love?"

"I said never, but I have tried it once with the most complete success. Never fear."

"Ah!" cried the marquis, "you have won my everlasting gratitude! But," he continued, "if only the birth itself could be prevented, and the symptoms of pregnancy be made to disappear?"

"Ah! Monsieur! you are suggesting a great crime now!"

"Alas!" rejoined the marquis, as if speaking to himself in bitter grief, "I prefer to deprive myself of a beloved child, the pledge of our affection, than to bring into the world a wretched creature that may cause the death of its mother."

"For mercy's sake, Monsieur, let us say no more about it; it's a deadly sin merely to think of it."

"Why, how can it be? is it better to cause the death of two people, and bring despair upon a whole family? O madame! I beg you, help us out of this difficulty?"

The marquis hid his face in his hands and sobbed as if he were weeping bitterly.

"Your distress moves me deeply," said the midwife; "but consider that for a woman of my condition it means capital punishment."

"Why do you prate of punishment? What about our mystery, and our secrecy, and our influence? You shall never be called to account until after the death and dishonor of everything that I hold dear on earth."

"I might perhaps—but, in that case, I must be secured first of all against annoyance from the authorities, and against confiscation, and must be assured of means of leaving the kingdom."

"Oh! don't let that trouble you! take my fortune! take my life!"

And he threw the purse down upon the table.

"Very well; simply for the purpose of extricating you from your extremely perilous situation, I consent to furnish you with a potion and certain instructions, which will relieve the lady of her burden on the instant. But she must take the very greatest precautions, and be sure to carry out my instructions exactly as I give them to you. *Mon Dieu!* it needs an occasion no less desperate than this to induce me to—look you—."

She took a small phial from a drawer, and continued:

"Here is a liquid which has never failed of its effect."

"Ah! madame, you save our honor, which is more than life! But this is not all; tell me how the potion is to be used, and in how large doses I must administer it."

"The patient must take one spoonful the first day, two the second day, and the third day——."

"I shall never remember all that; write the instructions in my pocket-book, I beg you."

The midwife hesitated a moment, but as he opened the pocket-book a note for five hundred francs fell to the floor. He picked it up and offered it to her.

"Take this," he said: "as it fell out, it isn't worth while to put it back."

This last gift was so generous that the woman's last suspicion vanished, and she wrote down the instructions in full in the marquis' pocket-book.

The marquis thereupon put the phial in his pocket, took the pocket-book and made sure that the instructions were duly written therein, then turned to the midwife with a diabolical smile:

"And now, my dear," he cried, "you are mine!"

"What do you mean, Monsieur?" she demanded.

"I mean," retorted the marquis, "that you are an infamous sorceress, and a villainous poisoner. I mean that I have proof of your crimes, and that you will do what I choose henceforth or die at the stake."

"Mercy! mercy!" cried the woman, falling at his feet.

"It's all in your own hands," replied the marquis coolly.

"Very well! what must I do?" the midwife asked: "I am ready for anything."

"In that case it is my turn to tell you my secrets; but I'll not write them down."

"Say on, Monseigneur, and you shall have no fault to find with my devotion to your service."

"Sit down then, and listen to what I say."

The midwife rose from the floor, and threw herself upon a chair.

"Good; I see that you are beginning to understand,"

said the marquis; "imprisonment, torture and the stake, or three times as much gold as you have there, that is to say an ample competence for the rest of your days."

The woman's eyes shone as brightly as ever, and she nodded her thanks, as if to imply that she was at the marquis' service, body and soul.

"There is," pursued the marquis, gazing steadfastly into the poor woman's eyes, "there is, in a château some thirty leagues away, a lady belonging to a great family, who is some months along in pregnancy. The thought that she may give birth to a child is hateful to me. You will be employed to attend her. I will tell you what you must do, and you will do whatever I tell you. First of all you must set out with me to-night. I have horses waiting a few yards away. I will conduct you to a place where you will await my orders. You will be notified when the time has come. You will lack nothing, and money will not be spared.

"I am ready," said the midwife laconically.

"You will obey my instructions in every respect?"

"I swear to do so."

"Then let us go."

She asked for no more time than was necessary to put a few clothes together, then set her house in order, locked her doors, and left the house with the marquis. A quarter of an hour later they were galloping along in the darkness, she being in utter ignorance whither the marquis was taking her.

The marquis reappeared at the château three days later, and found the count's family as he had left it, intoxicated with hope, and counting the weeks and the hours until the countess should be delivered. He explained his hasty departure upon the ground that he had

received letters calling him away upon important business. In speaking of his journey, he mentioned the sensation that had been caused in the province whence he had just returned by a surprising incident of which he came very near being a witness. A lady of rank was suddenly seized with the most violent pains of childbirth. All the skill of the doctors who were summoned to attend her was baffled, and the sufferer's death seemed inevitable. At last, in desperation, they sent for a midwife of great reputation among the country-people, but who was seldom employed by people of condition. This woman presented herself very modestly, as if distrusting her own powers. At the very beginning of her treatment the pains ceased as if by enchantment, and the patient experienced an indefinable sense of well-being; after a few hours she was safely delivered of the finest child in the world. But a violent fever set in immediately after, and carried her within a hair's breadth of the tomb. It was thereupon resolved to recall the physicians, against the wish of the husband, who felt perfect confidence in the midwife. The treatment ordered by the physicians only served to make matters worse. Again they had recourse to the stranger, and after three weeks the lady was miraculously restored to health. This episode, the marquis added, had so established the midwife's reputation that nothing was spoken of but her skill in the town where he had been, and in the surrounding country.

This story made a deep impression upon his hearers because of the countess' condition. The old maréchale remarked that it was often a mistake to laugh at these humble country savants, and that their experience and common sense sometimes put them in possession of secrets, which were denied to the profound learning of the

haughty city doctors. The count exclaimed that he was on the lookout for a midwife, and that such a woman as the marquis described was just what he needed. The conversation then turned in another direction, the marquis being the first to change the subject; he was content to have sown the first seeds of his scheme without arousing suspicion.

After dinner the party strolled about upon the terrace. As the maréchale's great age made it impossible for her to walk much, the countess and Madame de Bouillé took seats beside her. The count was walking back and forth with M. de Saint-Maixent. The latter asked very naturally how everything had gone during his absence, and whether Madame de Saint-Géran's discomfort had increased; for her condition had become the most important interest of the household. The conversation thereupon turned upon the same subject once more.

"By the way," said the count, "you were telling us just now of a very skillful midwife; would it not be well for me to send for her?"

"I really think it would be a wise selection," was the marquis' reply, "and that you are not likely to find anyone hereabouts to be compared to her."

"I am strongly inclined to write to her immediately, and to keep her here in the countess' service from this time on; in that way she will become better acquainted with her patient's temperament. Do you know where I must send to find her?"

"She lives in a village," said the marquis, "but, faith I don't know what village."

"But don't you know her name?"

"I am not quite sure if I remember it; Louise Boyard, I believe, or Polliard, I don't know which."

wept at his wife's heartrending shrieks. Many persons were present. The two daughters of the maréchale by her second husband, one of whom, at this time sixteen years of age, afterwards married the Duc de Ventadour, and played a prominent part in the subsequent litigation, desired to be present at the event which was to perpetuate an illustrious race that had been near extinction. Madame de Saligny, the late Maréchal de Saint-Géran's sister, was also present, as were the Marquis de Saint-Maixent, and the Marquise de Bouillé.

Everything seemed to favor the schemes of the two latter, whose thoughts at this crisis were not directed toward promoting the general interest. As it became evident that the pains were growing worse without result, that the *accouchement* was likely to be very difficult, and that the countess was in a critical condition, messengers were sent post-haste to the neighboring parishes to ask that prayers be offered for the safety of the mother and child. The Holy Sacrament was exposed to view in the churches at Moulins.

The midwife attended to everything herself. She pretended that she would be much more at her ease if allowed to do so, and they were eager to humor her slightest whim. The countess no longer said anything that could be understood, and the distressing silence was broken only by her heartbreaking cries. Suddenly Madame de Bouillé, who affected to be very busily employed about the sick-bed, observed that the countess was much annoyed by the presence of so many people, and assuming an air of authority, which she justified by her pretended devotion to the sufferer, she announced that everyone must withdraw save those whose presence was absolutely essential, and that Madame la Maréchale ought to be the first to go, so that all the others would

be guided by her example. They seized this opportunity to drag the count away from the painful scene, and everybody followed the maréchale from the room. Not even the countess' two maids were allowed to remain, but they were gotten rid of by giving them errands to do at a distance. The further pretext was put forward that, as the older of the two was but fifteen, it was manifestly improper that they should be present at such a scene. None remained by the sick-bed save the Marquise de Bouillé, the midwife and the sisters Quinet; thus the countess was given into the hands of her most cruel enemies.

It was seven o'clock in the evening; as the pains continued, the older Quinet held the sufferer's hand to soothe her. The count and the maréchale sent from moment to moment for news. The invariable reply was that all was going on well, and that their hopes would be fulfilled in a very short time. None of the messengers, however, were allowed to enter the room.

Three hours later the midwife declared that the countess could not endure the strain unless she had a little rest. She therefore made her swallow a liquid which she poured into her mouth by spoonfuls. The countess thereupon fell into so profound a sleep that she seemed to be dead. The younger Quinet thought for a moment that they had killed her, and began to weep in a corner. Madame de Bouillé reassured her.

Throughout that terrible night a shadow prowled about the corridors and stalked silently through the rooms, going ever and anon to the door of the sick-room, and whispering there with the midwife and the Marquise de Bouillé. It was M. de Saint-Maixent, who issued his orders, encouraged his confederates, and had an eye to all the ramifications of the plot, himself

a prey to the apprehension which accompanies the final preparations for a great crime.

The maréchale, on account of her advanced age, was compelled to take some rest. The count, overdone with fatigue, waited in a lower room, but a few steps from the spot, where the destruction of all that he held dear was being achieved.

The countess, during her lethargic slumber, was delivered, without knowing it, of a male child, who, immediately upon his appearance in the world, fell into the hands of his enemies, without even such protection as his mother might have afforded him by her cries and tears. The door was partly opened and a man who was waiting outside was admitted; it was Baulieu the *maître d'hôtel*.

The midwife, upon the pretext that certain duties must be at once attended to with respect to the child, took him into a corner of the room. Baulieu saw one of her gestures, and darted after her and grasped her arm. The creature was actually pressing her fingers into the child's skull. He snatched the poor little fellow away from her, but he bore the marks of the woman's fingers to his dying day.

It may be that the Marquise de Bouillé could not reconcile herself to the commission of so great a crime; but it is more probable that Baulieu's interference was due to the orders of M. de Saint-Maixent. The theory was that the marquis was suspicious of Madame de Bouillé's purpose to fulfill her promise to marry him after her husband's death, and wished to preserve the child's life as a means of forcing her to keep her word by threatening to produce him, if she were faithless. There were no other conceivable reasons which could

have induced a man of his character to take such great care of his victim.

The child was wrapped in swaddling-clothes and placed in a basket, and Baulieu hid him under his cloak, and went with his prey to join the marquis. They conferred together some time, after which the *maître d'hôtel* passed out through a door which opened upon the moat, thence to a terrace, and reached a bridge leading into the park. There were twelve gates to the park, and he had the keys to all of them. He mounted a fleet horse which was in readiness behind a wall, and galloped away.

That same day he passed through the village of Escherolles, a league from Saint-Géran, where he drew rein at the house of a nurse, the wife of one Claude, a glover. She gave her breast to the child, but Baulieu did not dare to make a long stay at a village so near Saint-Géran, so crossed the river Allier, and having alighted at the house of one Bocaud procured further refreshment for the child there. He then rode on toward Auvergne.

The heat was excessive, the horse was spent, and the child seemed ailing. A carter passed on his way to Riom. His name was Paul Boithion, from the village of Aigueperce, a regular carrier on that road. Baulieu made a bargain with him to take himself and the child in his cart. The horse followed behind.

In his conversation with the carrier Baulieu remarked that he should not take so great care of the child, were it not that he belonged to the first family of the Bourbonnais.

He reached the village of Ché about noon. The mistress of the house at which he stopped, who took children to nurse, consented to give a little of her milk to

the new arrival. The poor little fellow was covered with blood. She heated some water, removed his clothes, washed him from head to foot, and dressed him again in much better shape.

The carrier took them as far as Riom. There Baulieu got clear of him by failing to meet him as agreed; he started off again toward the abbaye of Livoine, and came to the village of Descontoux, in the mountains between Lavoine and Thiers. The Marquise de Bouillé had a château there which she visited from time to time.

The child was cared for at Descontoux by Gabrielle Moinot, who received a month's pay in advance; but she kept him only seven or eight days, because Baulieu refused to give her the names of the child's father and mother, or of the place to which she should write for information concerning her nursling. As she talked freely of her experience, no other nurse in the neighborhood was willing to take charge of the child. He was therefore taken away from Descontoux upon the high road to Bourgogne; all trace of him and his conductors was lost in the thickly-wooded country which lay thereabout.

These details were proved by the nurses, the carrier and other persons who subsequently gave evidence. We mention them because they assumed great importance in the judicial investigation. Those authors who gathered up the threads of this affair, and from whom we derive our information, omit, however, to tell us how the absence of the *maître d'hôtel* was explained at the château. It is probable that the marquis had some elaborate explanation prepared beforehand.

The countess' heavy sleep lasted until daybreak. She awoke, bathed in her own blood, and prostrated,

but nevertheless in a comparatively comfortable condition which led her to believe that she was delivered of her burden. Her first inquiries were for the child. She longed to see him and embrace him, and insisted upon knowing where he was. The midwife replied with perfect self-possession, while the maids turned away their heads for very shame at her effrontery, that she had not given birth to a child. The countess insisted that the contrary was true, and as she seemed to be greatly excited the midwife sought to calm her, and assured her that in any event her delivery could not be long delayed, and that she judged from the symptoms that had appeared during the night that she would give birth to a boy. This suggestion comforted the count and the maréchale, but had no effect upon the countess, who insisted that her son had been born.

That same morning, a scullery-wench met a woman going down to the water in the moat, with a package under her arm. She recognized the midwife and asked her what was in her bundle, and where she was going so early. The woman retorted that she was very inquisitive, but that what she had was of no consequence. The girl, pretending to be angry at the reply, seized one end of the bundle before the midwife had time to prevent her, and saw that it contained clothes saturated with blood.

"So madame has been delivered?" she said to the woman.

"No," she replied, quickly, "she has not."

The girl did not yield the point, but continued:

"How can it be that she hasn't, when Madame la Marquise, who was present, said that she has?"

The midwife was dumfounded.

"She must have a very long tongue, if she said that," she rejoined.

This girl's testimony became of the utmost importance at a later day.

The countess' indignation was hotter than ever the next day. She demanded with cries and tears that she should at least be told what had become of her child, maintaining always that she could not be mistaken when she declared that she had been safely delivered. The midwife coldly replied that the new moon was unfavorable for child-birth, and that she must wait until after the full, when it would come much more easily because everything would then be propitious.

The excited ideas of invalids do not commonly inspire confidence, but the countess' unwavering persistence would eventually have convinced everybody, had not the maréchale remarked that at the end of the ninth month of one of her periods of pregnancy she had had all the premonitory symptoms of approaching labor, but that they came to nothing, and she was not actually delivered until some six weeks after.

This anecdote aroused great hopes. The marquis and Madame de Bouillé omitted nothing which was likely to strengthen their hopes; but the countess still resisted, and her continual outbreaks of excitement caused the greatest uneasiness on both sides. The midwife, who saw no means of gaining any more time, and who was losing hope of prevailing against Madame de Saint-Géran's deep-rooted conviction, was urged on by terror to seek her death. She told her that her child had made its first efforts to come out into the world, but was doubtless held back by certain conditions, which she described, and that she must take some violent exercise to detach it. The countess, still firm in her belief, refused to comply

with this prescription; but the count, the maréchale, and the whole family urged her so strongly that she yielded.

They put her in a close carriage and drove her about all day over plowed fields and through the roughest roads. She was so shaken up that her breath gave out; and nothing less than the great vigor of her constitution enabled her to endure this severe discipline in the condition of a woman so lately brought to bed. She was taken back to her bed after this brutal excursion, and then, seeing that her opinion was absolutely unsupported, she threw herself into the arms of Providence, and sought consolation in religion. Meanwhile the midwife had administered harsh remedies to stop the flow of her milk; but she resisted all these attempts at murder, and slowly recovered her health and strength.

Time, which allays the keenest grief, gradually brought relief to the countess; nevertheless for a long time her grief would break out now and then on the slightest pretext; but it finally died away, until it was brought to life again by the occurrences we are about to describe.

There was a certain fencing-master at Paris who plumed himself upon his connection through one of his brothers with the service of a noble family, and who had married Marie Pigoreau, the daughter of an actress. He had recently died in impoverished circumstances, leaving his widow burdened with two children. La Pigoreau did not enjoy a very savory reputation in the neighborhood, and no one knew how she lived. Suddenly, after some few brief absences from home, and a few visits from a stranger, who always came at night with his face hidden in his cloak, her circumstances seemed vastly improved. It was observed that she had costly garments and magnificent baby's clothing at her

rooms, and it finally transpired that she was bringing up a strange child.

About the same time the gossips made the further discovery that she had deposited two thousand livres with a grocer of the quarter, named Ragnent. A few days later, the child's baptism having been delayed doubtless for fear of betraying his parentage, La Pigoreau determined to have the ceremony performed privately at Saint-Jean-en-Grève. She did not have recourse to her neighbors to act as sponsors for him, and she found a way to avoid mentioning the father and mother at the church. For godfather she selected the parish gravedigger, one Paul Marmion, who gave the child the name of Bernard.

La Pigoreau remained in a confessional during the ceremony, and gave the man ten sols.

The godmother was Jeanne Chevalier, a poor woman of the parish.

The following entry was made upon the register:

"On the seventh day of March, one thousand six hundred forty-two was baptized, Bernard, son of——and of——; godfather, Paul Marmion, laborer, in the service of this parish, and godmother, Jeanne Chevalier, widow of Pierre Thibon."

A few days later La Pigoreau put the child out to nurse at the village of Torcy in Brie, with a friend of hers, the wife of one Paillard. She told her that he was the child of people of condition, who had been placed in her care, and that she would not hesitate, if need were, to purchase his life with the life of one of her own children. The nurse did not keep him long, because she fell ill; La Pigoreau came to fetch him, lamenting the mishap, and said that it was very unfortunate for her that she could not bring up the child herself, for she might have earned thereby enough to pass the remainder of her

days in comfort. She then left him with the widow of a peasant named Marc Péguin in the same village. Her wages were promptly paid each month, and the child was boarded and clothed in a manner befitting the child of parents of high rank. La Pigoreau told this woman that he was the son of a great nobleman, and that he would eventually make the fortunes of those who had served him. A middle-aged man, commonly supposed to be his father, although La Pigoreau declared that he was her brother-in-law, came frequently to visit him.

When the child was eighteen months old, La Pigoreau took him away and weaned him. Of the two sons she had had by her husband, the elder was named Antoine, and the younger would have been named Henri if he had lived; he was born August 9, 1639, after the death of his father, who was killed in the month of June of that year, and died very soon after his birth. La Pigoreau determined to bestow the name of this second son of hers upon the young stranger, and by this means to bury forever the secret of the latter's birth. With that object in view she quitted the quarter where she lived, and went into hiding in another parish where she was not known.

The child was known by the name of Henri, La Pigoreau's second son, until he was two and a half years old; but at that time, either because she had not been engaged to keep him beyond that age, or because the two thousand livres on deposit with Ragnent the grocer were exhausted, and she could no longer collect pay for his board, she determined to get rid of him.

The woman had been heard to say that she was but little troubled concerning her first-born, because she was well-assured of the fortune in store for her younger son; and when some one suggested that if she was obliged to

part with either of them, she ought to keep the second, who was a fine boy, she replied that it did not lie with her to decide, as Henri had for his godfather a wealthy uncle, who insisted upon taking him. She often spoke of this uncle, her brother-in-law, who was, she said, *maître d'hôtel* in a great family.

One morning the footman at the Château de Saint-Géran informed Baulieu that a woman with a child was inquiring for him at the outer gate. Baulieu was, in fact, the fencing-master's brother, and godfather to La Pigoreau's second son. The reader will at once divine that he was the stranger who entrusted the nobly-born infant to her, and who visited him at his nurse's house. La Pigoreau talked with him a long while concerning her situation. The *maître d'hôtel*, deeply moved, took the child, and told La Pigoreau to await his decision at a place which he designated, a short distance from the château.

Baulieu's wife cried out vociferously at the first suggestion of this addition to her family, but he succeeded in calming her excitement by dwelling upon his sister-in-law's embarrassment, and the ease with which they could undertake to oblige her in such a household as the count's. He then went to his master and asked his permission to take the child into his family; in making the request he had a feeling of satisfaction which in some measure lessened the burden upon his conscience.

The count and countess at first opposed his plan, and told him that as he already had five children of his own he ought not to add to his responsibilities, but he was so persistent in his entreaties that he finally obtained what he desired. The countess expressed a desire to see the child, and as she was just setting out for Moulins, she said that he might go along in the

carriage with her women. When he was brought out to her, she cried:

"What a lovely child!"

He was very light with great blue eyes, and very regular features. She kissed him again and again, and the child responded very graciously to her endearments. She at once conceived a strong attachment for him, and said to Baulieu:

"I don't choose that he shall go in the carriage with my maids, but I will take him in my own."

When they returned to the château her affection for Henri had grown apace. She gazed at him frequently with a sad expression, and would then kiss him impulsively and hold him in her arms for a long while. The count shared her feeling for Baulieu's pretended nephew, whom they adopted, so to speak, and brought up as a child of good family.

The Marquis de Saint-Maixent and Madame de Bouillé were not married, although the old Marquis de Bouillé was long since dead. They had apparently renounced that part of their plan. The marchioness was held back by conscientious scruples doubtless, and the marquis' dissolute habits made him look unfavorably upon marriage. It was supposed that promises of another sort, and especially enormous sums of money made up to him for the breach of the agreement.

He was much addicted to society at this period, and paid his court to Mademoiselle Jacqueline de la Garde. He had succeeded in winning her heart, and had carried the affair so far that nothing but fear of the consequences prevented her from yielding to him. The marquis spoke to her of a midwife who could deliver women without pain, and said that he knew of instances in which she had done it. This same Jacqueline de la Garde also

declared that M. le Marquis de Saint-Maixent had often boasted to her, as if it were a very clever exploit, of having procured the abduction of the son of a provincial governor and grandson of a marshal of France; that in speaking of the Marquise de Bouillé he said that he had made her wealthy, and that she owed her great prosperity to him; and that one day, when she had gone with him to a fine place in the country which belonged to him, she warmly praised the spot, saying that it was a *beau lieu*, and he laughingly replied, that he knew another *Baulieu*, through whose means he had been able to make a fortune of five hundred thousand crowns.

He also said to Jadellon, Sieur de la Barbesauge, as he was returning with him by post from Paris, that the Comtesse de Saint-Géran had given birth to a son whom he had in his power.

The marquis had not seen Madame de Bouillé for a long time, but a common peril brought them together once more. They had learned with terror of the presence of Henri at the Château de Saint-Géran. They took counsel together upon the subject, and the marquis undertook to put an end to the danger in short order. However, he dared take no steps openly against the child, and his task was the harder, in that something of his unsavory life had transpired, and the Saint-Gérans were very cool in their bearing toward him.

Baulieu, witnessing day after day the growth of the affection of the count and countess for the little Henri, was a hundred times within an ace of betraying himself and making a clean breast of the whole affair. His heart was torn by remorse. From time to time he let fall various remarks which he thought he might safely make, on account of the length of time that had elapsed, but they were noticed. At one time he said that he

held Madame de Bouillé's life and honor in his hands, and at another time that the count and countess had stronger reasons than they dreamed for loving Henri. One day he put this case of conscience to a monk; whether a man who had assisted in keeping secret the birth of a child might not satisfy his conscience by restoring the child to its father, and mother, without making its identity known to them? The monk's reply is not recorded; but, judging from appearances, it was not such as to set Baulieu's conscience at rest. He responded to the congratulations of a citizen of Moulins upon having a nephew to whom his masters were so deeply attached, that they might well be fond of him for he was closely connected with them.

These various remarks were made to others than those who had the greatest interest in their subject. One day, a dealer in foreign wines came to the château and offered Baulieu a puncheon of Spanish wine at a bargain; he gave him a cup of it to taste, and in the evening he was taken horribly ill. He was put to bed, fairly writhing and shrieking with pain. A single thought possessed him when his agony allowed him to think at all, and he said again and again that he wished to ask forgiveness of the count and countess for a great wrong he had done them. Those who stood about him told him that it was of no importance, and that he must not let his last moments be made wretched by it; but he begged so pitifully that they should be sent for that some one finally went to tell them.

The count supposed that it was some trifling matter—perhaps the misappropriation of some paltry sum of money given him to make purchases for the household; and fearing that the poor fellow's death might be hastened by the shame of having to confess a mis-step, he sent

word to him that he forgave him and he could die in peace, and refused to go and see him. Baulieu died and took the secret with him to the grave. This was in 1648. The child was seven years old. He grew more attractive every day, and the count and countess felt that their love for him was constantly increasing. They gave him teachers in dancing and fencing. They gave him small clothes and a page's coat of their livery, and he served them in that capacity.

The marquis thereupon turned his batteries in that direction. He was meditating doubtless a scheme as infamous as those that preceded it, when justice came upon the scent of other heinous crimes of which he was accused. He was arrested one day as he was talking on the street with a servant in the Saint-Géran livery, and was taken to the Conciergerie du Palais.

Whether because of remarks that he had made, or because of other suspicious circumstances which we have noted, rumors were rife in the Bourbonnais as to the real facts of this affair. They came confusedly to the ears of the count and countess, but their only effect was to reawaken their grief without giving them an inkling of the truth.

At this juncture the count went to Vichy to take the waters, accompanied by the countess and Madame de Bouillé. It so chanced that they met Louise Goillard, the midwife, in that town. She renewed her acquaintance with the family, and was a particularly frequent visitor to Madame de Bouillé. One day the countess happened to enter the marchioness' room unexpectedly, and found them there together, talking in undertones. They at once broke off, and seemed much out of countenance.

The countess noticed their embarrassment, but without

attaching any special importance to it, and asked them what they were talking about.

"Oh, nothing," said the marchioness.

"Why, what is it?" rejoined the countess, noticing that she was blushing.

The marchioness could no longer avoid replying.

"Dame Louise," she said, more disconcerted than ever, "was praising my brother because he received her so pleasantly."

"Why so?" the countess asked the midwife; "why should you have expected an ungracious greeting from my husband?"

"I was afraid," said Louise Goillard, ill-advisedly, "that he would bear me a grudge on account of what took place when we thought you were going to lie in."

This obscure remark and the evident embarrassment of both women at last made an impression upon the countess, but she restrained herself and carried the conversation no farther. Her emotion did not escape the marchioness, however. The next day she ordered her carriage and went to her estate of Lavoine.

This *maladroit* step strengthened the suspicions of the countess. Her first idea was to have Louise Goillard arrested; but she realized that in a matter of such grave importance she must risk nothing by haste. She consulted the count and the maréchale, and the midwife was sent for, quietly, so that they might question her when she least expected it. She contradicted herself several times. More than that, her terror was enough to convict her of a crime. She was placed in the hands of the authorities, and the Comte de Saint-Géran entered his complaint before the Vice-Seneschal of Moulins.

The midwife underwent the preliminary examination. She confessed that the countess was really delivered, but

she added that it was a daughter, born dead, and that she buried it under a stone near the stairs of the barn in the farmyard.

The magistrate, accompanied by a physician and a surgeon, visited the spot described, and found neither stone nor body, nor any sign of either. They also searched to no purpose in other places.

These facts were reported to the maréchale, who replied that the horrible creature must be proceeded against at once. The prosecution was begun by the lieutenant civil, in the absence of the lieutenant criminal.

In a second examination, Louise declared that the countess did not lie in;

In a third, that she give birth to a male;

In a fourth, that she gave birth to a boy, whom Baulieu carried away in a basket;

In a fifth, she maintained that the avowal of the countess' delivery was extorted from her by violence. She made no charge against Madame de Bouillé or the Marquis de Saint-Maixent.

On the other hand, she was no sooner behind the bars than she dispatched her son Guillemin to the marchioness to say to her simply that she was arrested. The marchioness understood the implied threat, and was in consternation; she at once sent her squire, Monsieur de la Foresterie, to the lieutenant general, her adviser, and the count's deadly foe, to ask him to advise her at this crisis, and to tell her how she could assist the midwife without herself appearing in any way. His advice was to stifle the prosecution, and to obtain a decree forbidding any farther examination. The marchioness scattered money on all sides, and obtained the decree. It became useless almost immediately, and the prohibition was removed.

La Foresterie was instructed to go on to Riom, the home of the Quinet sisters, and ensure their continued silence by the use of money. The elder, when they left the service of the marchioness, shook her fist in her face, presuming upon her knowledge of the horrible secret, and told her that she would some day repent having turned them away, and that she would tell the whole story, even if she were to be hanged for it. The women now sent word to her that they were very anxious to re-enter her service; that the countess had made them very handsome offers if they would speak; that they had also been questioned in her name by a superior of the Capuchins, but had refused to say anything, until they should be told by her what replies to make. The marchioness was compelled to take them back. She kept the younger one with her, and married the older one to Delisle, her steward.

But La Foresterie, whose mission initiated him into strange secrets, was disinclined to serve such a mistress and left her. The marchioness said to him as he went away, that if he was so unwise as to reveal a word of what he had learned from the Quinets, her steward, Delisle, should give him a hundred blows with his dagger.

She had thus strengthened her line of intrenchments, and thought herself secure against attack; but it happened that one Prudent Berger, the Marquis de Saint-Maixent's page, who enjoyed his master's confidence and visited him at the Conciergerie, where he was imprisoned, began to give out startling information concerning the affair. His master had told him all the details of the countess' lying-in and the abduction of the child.

"I am surprised, monsieur," the page replied "that,

having so many troublesome matters upon your hands, you do not relieve your conscience of this one."

"I propose," said the marquis, "to restore the child to its father; I have already been ordered to do so by a Capuchin to whom I confessed that I abducted a grandson of a marshal of France and son of a provincial governor, without the knowledge of any of the famliy."

At this time the marquis was permitted to leave his prison occasionally on his parole. This will not surprise those who know the ideas on the subject of honor which were held in former days by gentlemen of rank, even the most criminal. The marquis availed himself of the opportunity to take the page to see a fair-haired child with a lovely face, who seemed to be some seven or eight years old.

"Look well at this boy, my page," he said, "so that you may be able to recognize him when I send you to inquire for him."

He afterwards admitted that the child he referred to was the son of the Comte de Saint-Géran.

The authorities, being made acquainted with these reports, thought that they had at last acquired decisive proof; but just at this time other proceedings were instituted against the marquis, and left him powerless to prevent the exposure of all his evil deeds. Exempts were sent in hot haste to the Conciergerie, but the jailers stopped them, saying that the marquis was very ill, and was engaged with a priest who was administering the sacraments. They insisted, however, and had almost reached his cell, when the priest came out, saying that a messenger must be dispatched at once to certain persons to whom the sick man had a secret to disclose, that he was in a desperate condition, and had confessed to him that he had poisoned himself.

The whole party entered the cell. M. de Saint-Maixent was writhing upon his pallet, in a pitiable condition, now roaring like a wild beast, and again mumbling incoherently.

The officers heard him say:

"Monsieur le Comte—send—the Comtesse de Saint-Géran—send for them—."

They rushed up to him eagerly, and urged him to explain.

The marquis was seized with another paroxysm; when he re-opened his eyes he said again:

"Send for the countess—I want them to forgive me—I want to confess everything to them."

The officers urged him to speak, and one of them went so far as to tell him that the count was there. The marquis turned his head, and muttered:

"I wish to tell you——."

He stopped, and gave one loud cry; he was dead.

It seemed as if fate had taken upon itself to close all those mouths from which the truth might have escaped. However this death-bed avowal of disclosures to be made to the Comte de Saint-Géran, and the testimony of the priest, who administered the sacraments, were most significant.

The chief judge, marshaling all the circumstances we have detailed, based thereon conclusions, which were universally admitted to be just. The carriers, nurses, and servants appeared; the route followed by the child and his various adventures, from his first appearance in the world to his arrival at the village of Descontoux, were all known.

In following the crime back to its source, it was impossible to avoid involving the Marquise de Bouillé; but there is reason to believe that the Comte de Saint-Géran

exerted himself to the utmost to avert suspicion from her, as he could not make up his mind to ruin his sister, whose dishonor would rebound upon him. The marchioness was consumed by remorse in her solitude, and never reappeared in the world. She died some time after, carrying the burden of her secret with her to the grave.

The magistrate at Moulins at last rendered a judgment declaring the midwife guilty of concealing the birth of the countess' child; and she was sentenced to be hanged after undergoing torture. She appealed from the sentence, and was afterwards transferred to the Conciergerie du Palais.

The count and countess no sooner found that the birth and abduction of the child were fully established by the legal proceedings, than their instinctive affection and the voice of nature in their hearts did the rest. They no longer doubted that their page was their son; they immediately removed his livery and bestowed upon him his true titles and prerogatives; he became the Comte de la Palice.

About this time an individual named Séqueville informed the countess that he had made a discovery of great importance to her; that a child was baptized at Saint-Jean-en-Grevè in 1642, and that a woman named Marie Pigoreau took a prominent part in the ceremony. Thereupon inquiries were made, and it was found that the child was put out to nurse at the village of Torcy. The count obtained a decree empowering him to institute an investigation before the magistrate at Torcy; he spared no effort to collect every ray of evidence; he obtained another decree empowering him to investigate still farther and to put forth a monition. Thereupon the elder Quinet informed the Marquis de Camillac that

the count was going far afield in search of something that was under his eyes. This additional light was all that was needed to make the truth apparent to everybody.

The child was exhibited to the nurses and witnesses from Torcy, in the presence of a commissioner, and was recognized by them, as well by the marks of the midwife's fingers upon his head, as by his fair hair and blue eyes. This ineffaceable mark of the midwife's crime was the principal evidence; the witnesses deposed that when La Pigoreau visited the child with one who seemed to be a man of rank, she always said that he was the son of a great nobleman, who had been placed in her charge, and that she hoped he would make her fortune as well as the fortunes of those who reared him.

The child's godfather, Paul Marmion, called *Gagne-Denier*, the grocer Raguenet, who furnished the two thousand livres, La Pigoreau's maid, who had heard her say that the count was obliged to take the child, and divers witnesses who deposed that La Pigoreau had said to them that the child was of too good a family to wear a page's livery, furnished convincing proof; and there were other proofs beside.

The Marquis de Saint-Maixent used to go to La Pigoreau's home to see the child, who went thither now and then from the Hôtel de Saint-Géran, to visit her as his mother. Prudent Berger, the marquis' page, recognized La Pigoreau perfectly, and also recognized the child as the one he had seen at her home, and whose story the marquis had told him. Lastly, divers other witnesses who testified either before the parliament or before the magistrates at Torcy, Cussy and elsewhere, deposed to facts which were so conclusive of the young count's identity, that it was impossible not to include others in the accusation.

The court ordered the arrest of La Pigoreau, who was not included in the earlier proceedings.

This step dumfounded the scheming woman, but she made an effort to avert its force.

The widow of the Duc de Ventadour, who was the daughter of the Maréchale de Saint-Géran by her second marriage and the count's half-sister, and the Comtesse du Lude, the daughter of Madame de Bouillé, whom the young count displaced as the Comte de Saint-Géran's heir, were greatly excited at the turn of affairs, and spoke of entering the lists themselves. La Pigoreau sought them out and concerted a plan with them.

Thereupon was instituted the celebrated lawsuit, which long engrossed the attention of France, and which recalls the case of the child claimed by two mothers which was referred to Solomon for decision.

The Marquis de Saint-Maixent and Madame de Bouillé had both passed out of the jurisdiction of the court, so the affair was confined to La Pigoreau and Mesdames du Lude and de Ventadour. These ladies undoubtedly acted in good faith in refusing to believe in the crime; for it is incredible that, if they had known the truth, they would have been capable of holding out so long and so stubbornly against it.

They sent reassuring messages to the midwife who had fallen sick in prison; after which they took counsel together, and resolved:

That the accused should appeal from the criminal proceedings.

That La Pigoreau should resort to a petition to the civil tribunal against the decrees ordering her arrest and confrontation with the witnesses.

That they should appeal from the obtaining and promulgation of the monition, as an abuse of authority,

and should also appeal from the judgment of the first magistrate, who sentenced the midwife to capital punishment.

And lastly, in order to divert public attention more completely, *that La Pigoreau should deny the countess' maternity, and claim the child as her own*, and that the two ladies should maintain that the countess' lying-in was an imposture resorted to by her to enable her to bring forward another's child as her own.

As a matter of precaution, and to sustain their attitude of disinterestedness, Mesdames du Lude and de Ventadour concealed their understanding with La Pigoreau.

About this time the midwife died in prison; disappointment and remorse undoubtedly accelerated the progress of her disease. After her death her son Guillemin admitted that she had often told him that the countess gave birth to a son, whom Baulieu had taken away, and that the child who was afterwards taken into Baulieu's family at the Hôtel de Saint-Géran was the same child he abducted. He added that he had concealed this fact so long as its disclosure would have injured his mother, and that Mesdames du Lude and de Ventadour assisted her while she lay in prison with their money and advice. Another proof.

The petition of the accused, and the intervention of Mesdames du Lude and de Ventadour were discussed on seven different occasions before the three chambers of parliament sitting together. The cause dragged along with the sluggish, halting movement characteristic of those days.

After the delivery of various arguments equally tedious and specious, Bignon, avocat-general, declared

himself in favor of the Comte and Comtesse de Saint-Géran. He concluded thus:

"That there was sufficient cause shown for refusing the petition of La Pigoreau to the civil tribunals, and for overruling the appeals of all the accused and other appellants, and sentencing them to pay an exemplary fine and costs; and inasmuch as the charges against La Pigoreau amply justified the order for her arrest, he would request with due deference to the discretion of the court, that she be presently sent back for judgment."

By a judgment rendered at the Tournelle by M. de Mesmes, August 18, 1657, "*the appeals of all the appellants and accused are dismissed with fine and cost. La Pigoreau is forbidden to leave the city of Paris and its suburbs, on pain of conviction.*"

This reverse at first disheartened Mesdames du Lude and de Ventadour and their supporters, but they soon resumed the contest with more resolution than ever. These ladies, who had driven La Pigoreau to all the hearings in their carriage, persuaded her to postpone final judgment by presenting a new petition wherein she prayed that the witnesses who testified to the pregnancy and birth might be confronted with her.

Upon this petition the court handed down a decree, August 28, 1658, ordering such confrontation to take place, but only on condition that La Pigoreau should within three days become a prisoner at the Conciergerie.

This decree, the results of which were much dreaded by La Pigoreau, had such an effect upon her, that after weighing her interest in gaining her cause, which she would certainly lose by flight, in the scales with the risk she would run by giving herself into custody, she abandoned her claim that she was the child's mother,

and fled the country. This proceeding was well calculated to discourage Mesdames du Lude and de Ventadour; but they were not at the end of their resources or their obstinacy.

La Pigoreau being adjudged in contempt, and the cause being ripe for judgment against the other accused, the Comte de Saint-Géran set out for the Bourbonnais to look to the execution of the decree ordering the confrontation of the witnesses. He had hardly arrived in the province when he was obliged to lay aside his business in order to receive the king and queen-mother, who passed through Moulins en route from Lyons to Paris. He presented the Comte de la Palice to their Majesties as his son, and they received him as such. But during their sojourn in the town the Comte de Saint-Géran fell sick, exhausted doubtless by the ardor with which he had striven to afford them a reception worthy of them.

During his illness which lasted only a week he recognized his son anew in his will, and named as his executors M. de la Barrière, Intendant of the province and Monsieur Vialet, Treasurer of France, and instructed them to carry his lawsuit through to the end. His last words were for his wife and son; his only regret that he had not been able to put an end to the troublesome affair. He died January 31, 1659.

The countess' maternal affection needed not the spur of her husband's injunctions, and she pressed the case with vigor. Mesdames du Lude and de Ventadour obtained letters of heirship which they caused to be ratified by default at the Châtelet. At the same time they appealed from the decree of the lieutenant-general of the Bourbonnais, awarding the custody of the young count to his mother, the countess, and constituting Monsieur de Bompré his guardian. The countess, on her

side, appealed from the decree ratifying the grant of letters of heirship, and did her utmost to have all the questions in dispute referred to the Tournelle for final adjudication. Her kinswomen prosecuted their appeal to the Grande Chambre, insisting that they could not be made parties to the cause pending at the Tournelle.

We will not undertake to guide the reader through the trackless labyrinth of the procedure of those days, nor to detail all the plots and counterplots which a pettifogging spirit suggested to the parties.

After three years the countess, on April 9, 1661, obtained a decree by which the king in person, "in the matter of the civil suit pending at the Tournelle, and of the appeals entered by the respective parties, and of the last petition of Mesdames du Lude and de Ventadour, doth hereby remit said causes to the three chambers sitting in banc, to be there adjudged jointly or severally as the said three chambers shall deem that justice requires."

The countess was upon her first battlefield once more. Legal science was exemplified in documents of vast length. The advocates and attorneys fairly outdid each other. After further interminable proceedings and arguments, longer and more involved than ever, which did not, however, succeed in befogging the court, judgment was at last rendered in conformity with the conclusions of M. le Procureur-general, to the following effect:

"Without passing upon the petition of Mesdames Marie de la Guiche and Éléonore de Bouillé, praying that etc., etc.

"Due inquiry having been made etc., etc.

"The divers appeals and judgments being hereby quashed, etc.

"The court, in the matter of the petition of Claude

de la Guiche, deceased, and Suzanne de Longaunay, bearing date August 12, 1658.

"Doth order:

"That the provisional decree heretofore rendered be made definitive;

"That Bernard de la Guiche, as the legitimate son of said Claude de la Guiche and Suzanne de Longaunay, be sustained and protected in possession and enjoyment of the name and arms of La Guiche, and of all the property whereof said Claude de la Guiche, his father, died possessed; and that said Marie de la Guiche and Éléonore de Bouillé be enjoined from disturbing him in such possession and enjoyment:

"That the petitions of Éléonore de Bouillé and Marie de la Guiche of June 4, 1654, August 4, 1655, January 6, February 10, March 12, April 15, and June 2, 1656, be dismissed and the petitioners be mulcted in costs.

"That the judgment by default against La Pigoreau be confirmed, and that she, being duly convicted of the crimes alleged against her, be punished therefor by being hanged and strangled upon a gallows erected upon the Place de Grève in this city, if she can be apprehended, and if she be not apprehended that she be hanged in effigy upon a gallows erected upon said Place de Grève; that all and every of her effects in those countries where confiscation may take place, be confiscated for the benefit of those who may establish their title thereto; the sum of eight hundred Paris livres being first deducted from such effects and others not subject to confiscation, by way of fine, the same to be applied to the maintenance of the prisoners at the Conciergerie du Palais, and to the costs of prosecution."

It is doubtful if there is another instance in history of

a suit so stubbornly contested on both sides, but especially on that side which was destined to lose it. As to the countess, who consistently sustained the part of the true mother of scripture from beginning to end, her heart was in the affair to such an extent, that she said to the magistrates again and again in the course of the litigation, that if they did not recognize the boy as her son, she would marry him, and thus assure him all her property.

The young Comte de la Palice, who became Comte de Saint-Géran upon his father's death, married in 1667 Claude-Françoise-Madeleine de Varignies, only daughter of François de Monfreville, and Marguerite Jourdain de Carbone de Canisi. He had but one child, a daughter, born in 1688, who became a nun. He died at the age of fifty-five, and thus this illustrious family became extinct.

NISIDA.

NISIDA

1825

If our readers, tempted by the Italian proverb to see Naples before they die, should ask our advice as to the most propitious moment to view that enchanted city, we should strongly urge them to land at the Mole or at Mergellina upon a fine day in summer, just as some solemn procession is issuing from the cathedral.

There are no words to describe the deep and innocent excitement of this worthy people, who have enough poetry in their souls to believe in their own happiness. The entire city at such times bedecks and beautifies itself like a bride on her wedding-morning; the gloomy façades of marble and granite disappear beneath silk hangings and festoons of flowers; the rich make a dazzling, splendid display, the poor proudly array themselves in their rags. All is light and melody and sweet perfume. There is a sound like the continuous buzzing of an immense swarm of bees, interspersed with festal cries impossible to describe. The bells ring out sonorously in every key; the regimental bands in the distance make the arches ring with the strains of their triumphal marches; the dealers in sherbets and watermelons shout their wares in deafening tones from their brazen throats. Groups gather here and there; there are greetings and questioning and much excited gesticulation; piercing glances, eloquent pantomime and picturesque attitudes; and over all a universal enthusiasm, an indefinable, intoxicating charm. Earth seems very near heaven,

and it is easy to understand that the Neapolitans would desire no other paradise, if God would but banish death from this blessed spot.

The story we are about to relate opens upon one of these magic pictures. It was the festival of the Assumption in the year 1825; the sun had been some four or five hours above the horizon, and the long Strada Forcella, lighted from end to end by his slanting rays, cut the city in two, like a silk ribbon. The lava pavement, carefully polished, shone like mosaic, and the king's troops, with their plumes waving proudly in the air, lined the streets with a double living hedge. The balconies, the windows, the roofs, the galleries with their slender balustrades, and the structures hastily erected during the night and crowded with spectators, were not unlike the boxes at a theatre. A vast crowd, in which all the colors of the rainbow were interwoven, encroached upon the reserved space, and broke through the dams of soldiers here and there like a torrent overflowing its banks. These fearless sight seers would have stood there, nailed to their places, for half of their lives without the least sign of impatience.

At last, toward noon, a cannon shot was heard, and was followed by a shout of satisfaction. It was the signal that the head of the procession had appeared at the church door. At the same moment a squad of carabineers swept the street clear of people, the line regiments opened the flood-gates for the excited crowd, and soon there was nothing to be seen on the roadway, save now and then a frightened dog hooted at by the crowd, pursued by the soldiers, and running off at full speed.

The procession debouched through Strada de Vescovato. First came the guilds of shopkeepers and mechanics, the hatters, weavers, bakers, butchers, cutlers

and silversmiths. Their costume was severely simple; black coat, knee-breeches, low shoes and silver buckles. As the monotonous ranks of these worthies afforded little entertainment to the multitude, much loud whispering began to be audible on all sides; then the wits ventured to crack a joke or two upon the most rotund citizens, and those who had the least hair upon their heads, and at last the boldest of the lazzaroni glided between the soldiers' legs to gather up the wax that dripped from the lighted candles.

After the mechanics came the religious orders, Dominicans and Carthusians, Carmelites and Capuchins. They walked very slowly, stern of feature, with eyes cast down, and their hands upon their hearts—some with rubicund, florid faces, prominent cheek-bones, rounded chins, and herculean heads set upon bull-like necks—others with their pallid cheeks, wrinkled by suffering and penance, veritable living ghosts—in a word, the smooth and the rough side of monastic life.

As they were passing, La Nunziata and La Gelsomina, two lovely girls, took advantage of the gallantry of an old corporal to show their pretty faces in the front rank of the spectators. The solution of continuity was flagrant; but the cunning warrior seemed ever so little inclined to wink at the infraction of discipline.

"Look! there's Padre Bruno!" suddenly exclaimed Gelsomina; "Good-morning, Padre Bruno."

"Hush, cousin! you mustn't speak to the procession."

"Well, that's a good one! He's my confessor. Pray, can't I say good-morning to my confessor?"

"Hold your tongue, chatterbox."

"Who said that?"

"Oh! my dear, there's Frate Cucuzza, the alms-gatherer."

"Where is he? where is he?"

"See him yonder, laughing in his beard. Well, if he's not brazen-faced!"

"God in heaven! if we had dreamed ——."

While the cousins were indulging in their endless comments upon the Capuchins and their beards, the hooded capes of the canons, and the surplices of the Seminarists, the *feroci* came from the other side of the street to keep order with the assistance of their carbine-butts.

"By the blood of my patron saint!" cried a stentorian voice, "if I catch you between my thumb and forefinger I'll straighten out your back for the rest of your days."

"Whom are you scolding at, Gennaro?"

"This cursed hunchback, who has been digging at my back for an hour as if he thought he could make a hole in it to look through."

"It's an infernal shame," retorted the hunchback in an aggrieved tone, "I have been here since last evening, and slept out o' doors to keep my place, and this rascally giant must come and plant himself in front of me like an obelisk."

The hunchback lied like a Jew, but the crowd rose as one man against the obelisk. He was of superior physique, and crowds are generally composed of pigmies.

"Hi there! come down from your stilts!"

"Hi there! get off your pedestal!"

"Take off your hat!"

"Off with his head!"

"Sit down!"

"Lie down!"

The intensification of the public interest evidenced by this torrent of invective was a sure indication that the

most noteworthy portion of the spectacle was at hand. On came the chapters, the priests, the bishops, the chamberlains, the magistrates of the city, the gentlemen of the king's bedchamber, and finally the king himself, bareheaded, and taper in hand, following the magnificent statue of the Virgin.

The contrast was striking; in the wake of the hoary-headed monks and the pale novices, resplendent young officers, defying the skies with the ends of their moustaches, and eyeing the jalousies with killing glances, followed the procession with a *distrait* air, and interrupted the sacred canticles, with scraps of very unorthodox conversation.

"Did you notice, my dear Doria, with what apish grace the old Marchesa Acquasparta took her raspberry ice?"

"Her nose made her ice turn pale. But what fine bird is that spreading his tail feathers in front of her?"

"That's the Cyrenean."

"I beg your pardon. I have never seen that name in the Book of Gold."

"He is the man who helps the poor marquis carry his cross."

The officer's profane allusion was drowned in a prolonged murmur of admiration which suddenly ran through the multitude, and every eye was turned upon one of the maidens who were strewing flowers in the path of the Madonna.

She was ravishingly beautiful. Her head was bathed in a flood of sunlight, her feet buried in a heap of ferns and roses, and she stood out against the light cloud of incense, a seraphic apparition. Her hair, of a glossy black, fell in curls below her shoulders; her brow, white as alabaster, and smooth as a mirror, reflected the brilliant

rays of the sun; her lovely brown eyebrows, arched in the true patrician style, blended with the opal hue of her temples; her eyelids were lowered, and the graceful sweep of their black lashes veiled a humid glance, instinct with divine emotion; her straight, slender nose, with its two rosy nostrils, gave to her profile that type of antique beauty which is fast vanishing from the earth. A calm, serene smile, one of those ineffable smiles, which have left the soul but have not yet reached the lips, slightly raised the corners of her mouth in an expression of infinite gentleness and bliss. Nothing could be more perfect than the chin which terminated the regular oval of this glorious face; her snow-white neck, exquisitely curved, supported her shapely head with the utmost grace, like the slender stalk of a lily, which waves to and fro in a gentle breeze.

A waist of crimson velvet, studded with golden insects, showed to perfection the outlines of her slender, erect form, and a rich cord secured the numerous folds of an ample, flowing skirt, which fell to her feet, like those chaste garments in which the Byzantine painters loved to drape their angels. Truly it was a wondrous sight, and beauty so rare and withal so modest had not been seen within man's memory.

Among those who stared at her most persistently was the young Prince of Brancaleone, one of the greatest nobles in the kingdom. Handsome, young and gallant, at twenty-five years he had outdone the exploits of all the Don Juans in history. Fashionable young women told horrible tales about him and adored him in secret; the most virtuous simply avoided him, so impossible it seemed to resist his fascination. The young madcaps had unanimously chosen him for their model, for his triumphs prevented many Miltiades from sleeping, and

with good reason. To describe this fortunate personage in a word, it will suffice to say that in the matter of seductive qualities he was the most perfect embodiment of the devil's inventive genius in this age of progress.

The prince was arrayed for the occasion in a grotesque costume, which he wore with ironical gravity and knightly grace. A black satin doublet and small clothes, embroidered stockings, and gold-buckled shoes formed the essential portion of his attire; over all he wore a long robe of brocade with lapels of ermine and flowing sleeves, and a superb sword with a diamond-studded belt. In deference to his rank he was awarded the rare distinction of carrying one of the six golden poles which upheld the canopy with its waving plumes and rich embroidery.

As soon as the procession resumed its march, Eligi di Brancaleone glanced furtively at a little man, red as a lobster, who was walking almost beside him, holding his Excellency's hat in his right hand with the most solemn demeanor at his command. He was a valet, and every seam of his livery was adorned with lace; we ask his permission to present a brief sketch of his life.

Trespolo was born of poor and thieving parents, which accounts for his having been left an orphan at an early age. Being thereby left without occupation, he began to study life from an eminently social point of view. If we can believe a certain sage of antiquity, we are all sent into this world to solve some problem; his problem was how to live without work. By turns sacristan and juggler, druggist's clerk and cicerone, he soon tired of all these occupations. Begging was in his opinion altogether too hard work, and one must take more trouble to steal than to remain honest. All things considered, he decided to become a contemplative philosopher. He

was tremendously fond of the horizontal attitude, and experienced the greatest pleasure in watching the course of the stars. Unluckily the worthy fellow, as he was meditating one fine day, thought that he was going to die of hunger, which would have been a pity, for he was just beginning to accustom himself to eat nothing at all.

However, as he was predestined to play a small part in our story, God had pity upon him for that time, and sent to his assistance, not one of his angels (the rascal was not worthy of it), but a dog of the Brancaleone pack. The noble animal got scent of the philosopher and gave a little kindly howl which would have done credit to his brethren of Mont St. Bernard. The prince, who was returning in triumph from the hunt, having had that day the twofold good fortune to kill a bear and lose a countess, was moved by an unwonted longing to perform some good action. He drew near the varlet who was just ready to become a corpse, moved him with his foot, and seeing that there was some life left in him, ordered his people to take him along.

From that day Trespolo was very near realizing the dream of his life. A little more than valet and a little less than majordomo, he became the confidential man of his master, who made the utmost possible use of his talents; for Trespolo was sly as a demon, and almost as crafty as a woman. The prince, like the superior man he was, realized that true genius is naturally slothful, and so asked nothing of him but his advice. The duty of chastising bores was entrusted to him alone, and truly he was equal to any two at the task.

Nevertheless, as nothing is perfect here below, Trespolo had many wretched moments in this delightful life; his happiness was clouded from time to time by periods of

panic terror, which greatly amused his master; at such times he would babble incoherently, choke back the most violent of sighs, and suddenly lose his appetite. The fact was that the rascal was afraid of damning himself forever; and the reason is not far to seek. At first he was afraid of everything, afterwards he was told again and again that the devil does not leave an instant's repose to those who are so misguided as to fall into his clutches.

Trespolo was having one of his attacks of repentance, when the prince, after glaring at the girl with the fierce avidity of a vulture preparing to pounce upon his prey, turned to his confidential adviser as if to address him. The poor fellow divined his master's abominable purpose, and, unwilling to become a party to a sacrilegious conversation, he opened his eyes to their fullest extent, and gazed ecstatically skyward. The prince coughed and stamped and kicked his sword so that it struck against Trespolo's legs, but could not draw from him the slightest sign of recognition, so deeply absorbed by thoughts of things celestial did he seem to be. Brancaleone felt tempted to twist his neck; but he was holding the pole with both hands, and then, too, the king was present.

At last they drew near the Church of Santa-Chiara, tomb of the Neapolitan monarchs, where several princesses of the blood, bartering the crown for the veil, had recently buried themselves alive. The nuns, the novices, and the abbess, hidden behind their jalousies, threw flowers down upon the procession. One bouquet fell at Brancaleone's feet.

"Trespolo, pick up that bouquet," he said, so loudly that the servant could no longer pretend not to hear

"That's Sister Theresa," he added in an undertone; "fidelity doesn't exist now outside of convents."

Trespolo picked up the bouquet, and approached his master with the expression of a man who is being strangled.

"Who is that girl?" the prince demanded, shortly.

"Which one?" stammered the servant.

"Per Bacco! the one walking in front of us."

"I do not know, monsignore."

"You will find out something about her before evening."

"I shall have to go a long distance for that."

"Then you do know her, insufferable varlet? I have a mind to have you hanged like a dog."

"In pity's name, monsignore, think upon the salvation of your soul, and upon the life to come."

"I advise you to think upon this present life. What is her name?"

"Nisida; she is the prettiest girl on the island from which she takes her name. She is innocence itself. Her father is only a poor fisherman, but I assure your excellency that on his island he is respected like a king."

"Indeed!" rejoined Brancaleone with an ironical smile. "I confess to my great shame be it said, that I have never visited the little island of Nisida. See that you have a boat made ready to-morrow, and we will see ——."

He broke off abruptly because the king was looking at him, and began to sing, with a devout expression, in his most sonorous baritone:

Genitori genitoque laus et jubilatio.

"*Amen!*" fervently exclaimed his servant.

Nisida, the beloved daughter of Solomon the fisherman, was as has been said the fairest flower in all the isle whose name she bore. That isle is the most charming spot, the most delightful corner of earth within our knowledge; it is a basket of verdure set daintily down amid the pure, transparent waters of the bay; a hillock covered with orange and wild-rose trees, and crowned at the summit by a castle of marble. All about stretches the magical perspective of that vast amphitheatre, one of creation's most impressive marvels. There is Naples, the voluptuous siren, lying carelessly along the shore of the sea; there are Portici, Castellamare, Sorrento, whose names stir the imagination to a thousand dreams of poetry and love; there are Pausilippo, Baja and Ponzgoles, and those limitless campagnas, where the ancients dreamed of the Elysian Fields, sacred solitudes which seem to be peopled by the men of other days, where the earth rings hollow beneath the feet, like an empty tomb, where the air is filled with unfamiliar sounds, and strange melody.

Solomon's cabin stood in that part of the island which turns its back to the capital, and looks off towards the distant bluish peaks of Capri. Nothing could be simpler, or fairer to look upon. Brick walls covered with ivy greener than the emerald, and dotted with white bell-flowers; on the ground floor a spacious room where the men slept, and where the family took their meals; on the first floor Nisida's virgin chamber, fresh and cool, lighted by a single window looking out upon the bay; above, a roof-terrace in the Italian style, with its four vine-clad supporting pillars, its bower of greenery, and its broad parapet, covered with moss and wild flowers.

A low hawthorn hedge, looked upon with traditional veneration, formed a sort of rampart around the fisher-

man's domain, and was a surer safeguard of his house than the deepest moats and castellated walls could have been. The boldest bullies of the neighborhood would have preferred to fight in front of the parsonage or on the church steps rather than in front of Solomon's little yard. And yet it was the gathering-place of the whole island. Every evening at precisely the same hour the good wives all came thither to knit their woolen caps, and exchange news. Groups of half-naked sunburnt children, mischievous as little devils, played happily together, rolling about on the grass, and throwing handfuls of sand into one another's eyes at great risk of blinding one another, while their mothers were absorbed in the serious tittle-tattle which characterizes the inhabitants of small villages. They assembled thus every day before the fisherman's house; it was an unspoken, almost involuntary homage, sanctified by long habit, and of which no one was conscious; the spirit of envy which commonly reigns in small communities, was banished from this.

The ascendancy which old Solomon possessed over his equals came about so simply and naturally that no one could find any ground of complaint therein. His power increased insensibly from day to day, and was not noticed until it was found that everybody was benefited by it, just as we do not notice the height to which a tree has grown until we enjoy its shade. If a dispute arose on the island the adversaries preferred to submit to the fisherman's arbitration rather than go to law, and he always had the good fortune, or the tact, to send both parties away content. He knew what remedies to prescribe in sickness better than any doctor; for it rarely happened that he or some one of his family had not had the same disease, and his knowledge, based

upon his own experience, attained most fortunate results. Moreover, he was not interested, as doctors are, in prolonging sickness.

For a number of years past, the only formality recognized in the island as a sufficient guaranty of the inviolability of a contract was that it should be entered into through the fisherman. The money passed through his hands, and that was enough. They would have thrown themselves into the crater of Vesuvius at the moment of its greatest activity rather than fail to stand by so solemn an undertaking.

At the time at which our narrative begins it was impossible to find anyone on the island who had not experienced Solomon's generosity, without having been obliged to confess their need to him. As it had become an invariable custom for the little population of Nisida to pass their leisure hours in front of his cottage, the old man, as he sauntered leisurely about among them, whistling his favorite tune, would detect their physical or mental ailments as he passed, and that same evening he or his daughter was sure to appear with consolation for every trouble, and balm for every wound. In short, he represented in his single person all the occupations whose mission it is to benefit humanity. The lawyer, the doctor, the notary had all abandoned the field to the patriarchal beneficence of the fisherman. Even the priest had surrendered at discretion.

On the day following the festival of the Assumption, Solomon was sitting, as his custom was, on a stone bench beside his door with his legs crossed and his arms hanging carelessly at his sides. At the first glance one would have taken him to be sixty years old at most, although he was really past eighty. He had all his teeth, which were white as pearls, and took pride in

showing them. His placid brow, crowned by beautiful white hair, was as smooth and firm as marble; not a wrinkle showed at the corner of his bright blue eye, whose sparkling depths revealed a freshness of soul and undying youthful vigor, such as the old mythology attributed to the gods of the ocean. He left his arms and his muscular neck bare with the natural pride of an old man. No gloomy thought, no fear of evil to come, no biting remorse had ever cast a shadow upon his long and peaceful existence. He had never seen a tear glistening in the eye of anyone about him that he had not made haste to wipe it away; though poor himself, he had showered blessings upon his fellows, which all the kings on earth could not have brought with all their gold; though unlearned, he had spoken to his fellow-men the only language they could understand—the language of the heart. A single drop of gall had mingled its bitterness with this inexhaustible well-spring of happiness, a single sorrow had cast a cloud over his days of sunshine; that was his wife's death, and that he had forgotten.

All the love of his heart was poured out upon Nisida, whose birth caused her mother's death; he loved her with that blind love which old men commonly feel for their last born children. At that moment he was gazing at her with an expression of deepest rapture, and watching her as she flitted hither and thither, now mingling with the groups of children, and chiding them because their games were dangerous or too noisy, and again sitting on the grass beside their mothers, and joining in their conversation with serious and thoughtful interest. Nisida was fairer to look upon than in the procession of the preceding day; with the vague cloud of incense which enveloped her from head to foot had vanished all

the poetic mystery, which somewhat embarrassed the admiring crowd, and forced them to turn aside their glances. She had been transformed into a true daughter of Eve once more, without losing any of her charm. Simply dressed, as she always was on her working-days, she was distinguishable among her companions only by her marvelous beauty, and the startling whiteness of her skin. Her beautiful black hair was coiled in heavy tresses around one of the little daggers of chased silver, recently brought to Paris by the right of conquest which gives the pretty Parisiennes the mastery of the fashions of all the lands, as England has the mastery of the sea.

Nisida was adored by her girl friends, and all the mothers were proud to adopt her as their own child. She was the glory of the island. The idea of her as a superior being was so universally adopted, that if some reckless wight, forgetting the distance which separated him from the maiden, ventured to talk a little too loudly of his pretensions, he became the laughing-stock of all his comrades. The most talented performers of the *tarantella* lost countenance before old Solomon's daughter, and dared not ask her to join the dance. Now and then a party of musicians from Amalfi or Sorrento, attracted by the rare beauty of this angelic creature, ventured to breathe their passion, taking great care, however, to veil it under the most delicate allusions. But they seldom reached the last stanza of their song; at the slightest sound they would break off abruptly, throw down their triangles and mandolins, and fly like frightened nightingales.

One only had enough courage or was enough in love to brave the chaff. It was Bastiano, the most accomplished diver on the island. He sang, too, but his voice was deep and hollow; his songs were of a lugubrious

turn, and the tunes to which he sang them sad and plaintive. He never accompanied himself upon any instrument, and never retired until his song was finished.

On the day in question he was even more gloomy than usual; he kept his footing, as if by a miracle, upon a bare, slippery rock, and cast a scornful glance upon the women who were watching him with smiling faces. The sun, which was just sinking into the sea like a globe of fire, shone full upon his harsh features, and the evening breeze, rippling along the surface of the water, blew gently upon the reeds which shivered at his feet. Absorbed by dismal thoughts he sang these melancholy words in the melodious tongue of his native province:

"O window, that shinest in the darkness like a half-opened eye, how dark thou art! Alas! alas! my poor sister is ill!

"Her mother comes to meet me, all in tears, and says: 'Thy poor sister is dead and buried.'

"Oh! Jesus! Jesus! have pity upon me; you stab me to the heart.

"Pray tell me, my kind neighbors, how it came about; tell me her last words.

"'She had a burning thirst, and would not drink, because thou wert not by to pour the water for her with thy hand.'

"O my sister! my sister!

"'She refused her mother's kiss because thou wert not there to kiss her.'

"O my sister! my sister!

"'She wept until she ceased to breathe, because thou wert not by to dry her tears.'

"O my sister! my sister!

"'We placed upon her brow her wreath of orange

blossoms, we covered her with a veil as white as snow, and then we laid her gently on her bier.'

"Thanks, my kind friends, I go to join her.

"'Two angels came down from heaven, and bore her away upon their wings. The Magdalen came to the gate of Paradise to bid her welcome.'

"Thanks, my kind friends, I go to join her.

"'There they sat her down upon a bench of light, they gave her a chaplet of rubies, and now she tells her beads with the Blessed Virgin.'

"Thanks, my kind friends. I go to join her."

As he uttered the last words of his doleful refrain he leaped from the rock into the sea as if he really proposed to drown himself. Nisida and the other women shrieked in dismay, for the diver did not reappear for several minutes.

"Are you losing your senses?" cried a young man who had suddenly made his appearance among the women without attracting anyone's attention. "What in the world are you afraid of? You know perfectly well that that's Bastiano's trade. Don't you be alarmed; all the fish in the Mediterranean will die by drowning before any harm happens to him. Water is his natural element. Good evening, sister; good evening, father."

The young fisherman kissed Nisida upon the forehead, then went up to his father, bending his comely head, removed his red cap, and respectfully kissed the old man's hand. It was his habit to come every evening to ask his blessing before putting out to sea, where he often passed the night fishing in his skiff.

"God bless thee, Gabriel, my boy!" said the old man, passing his hand slowly over his son's curly black locks, and a tear shone in his eye.

Then he rose gravely to his feet and said to the groups surrounding him, in a sweet, dignified voice:

"Come, my children, it is time to separate. The young folks to their work, and the old to their rest. The *Angelus* is ringing."

The whole assemblage knelt, and after a short prayer, they all went their respective ways. Nisida, after performing the last of her daily duties for her father, went up to her room and replenished the oil in the lamp which burned night and day before the Virgin; then went to the window, and leaned upon the sill. She put aside the branches of jasmine, which grew like perfumed curtains over her window, and gazed dreamily out upon the sea.

At that very hour a small boat, rowed noiselessly by two men, drew near the opposite side of the island. It was quite dark. A small man first stepped cautiously ashore, and held out his hand respectfully to another person, who disdained the proffered assistance, and leaped carelessly out upon the beach.

"Well, villain," he cried, "am I gotten up to your taste?"

"Monsignore is perfect."

"I flatter myself that I am just that. To make the metamorphosis complete, I selected the most disgracefully ragged coat that ever adorned a Jew's counters."

"Monsignore resembles a pagan god on his way to an assignation. Jupiter has sheathed his thunderbolt, and Apollo has put his beams in his pocket."

"A truce to your mythology. First of all, I forbid you calling me monsignore."

"Yes, Monsignore."

"If the information I have gleaned during the day is accurate, the house should be on the other side of the island in the most secluded and most solitary spot to be

found. Keep some distance behind me, and don't make yourself uneasy about me, for I know my rôle by heart."

The young Prince of Brancaleone, whom our readers have already recognized notwithstanding the darkness of the night, went on toward the fisherman's house, making as little noise as possible; he walked back and forth several times on the shore, and after a summary reconnoissance of the place he proposed to attack, set himself patiently to wait until the moon should rise and shine upon the scene he had prepared. His patience was not put to a severe test, for the darkness gradually grew less dense, and soon Solomon's little house was bathed in silvery light.

Then he timidly drew near, cast an imploring glance upward toward the window, and sighed with all the strength of his lungs. The maiden, rudely awakened from her revery by this singular personage, started back, and prepared to close the shutters.

"Stop, lovely Nisida," cried the prince, in the tone of a man carried away by an overmastering passion.

"What is your pleasure, signor?" asked the girl, amazed to hear herself called by name.

"To adore you as one adores a madonna, and to move you by my sighs."

Nisida gazed earnestly at him, and after a few seconds' reflection, she asked him abruptly, as if in response to a secret thought; "Are you of this country or a stranger?"

"I reached the island," the prince replied glibly, "just as the sun was writing his farewell to earth, dipping his beam which serves him as a pen, in the darkness, which is his inkstand."

"And who are you?" queried the girl, failing utterly to comprehend his strange words.

"Alas! I am only a poor student, but I may become a great poet like Tasso, whose verses you have often heard sung by a fisherman, who sends their touching melody back to you as he sails away,—a last farewell which dies as it reaches the shore."

"I do not know if I do wrong to speak to you, but I will at least be frank with you," said Nisida, blushing; "I am unlucky enough to be the richest girl on the island."

"Your father will not be inflexible," rejoined the poet eagerly; "one word from you, light of my eyes, fair goddess of my heart, and I will work night and day without remission, I will make myself worthy to possess the treasure God has revealed to my bedazzled eyes, and I, the poor obscure creature here before you, will become rich and powerful."

"I have stayed too long to listen to words that a young girl ought not to hear; forgive me, signor, if I withdraw."

"O have pity on me, my heartless enemy. What have I done to you, I pray to know, that you should leave me thus with death in my heart? You do not know that for months past I have been following you like your shadow everywhere you go, prowling about your house at night, stifling my sobs not to disturb your peaceful slumber? You dread perhaps to let a poor wretched creature who adores you move you to pity at the first interview. Alas! Juliet was young and fair like you, and she did not force Romeo to beg long for her compassion."

Nisida cast a dreamy, sorrowful glance upon the handsome youth who spoke so softly to her and then withdrew without replying further, in order not to humiliate him in his poverty.

The prince struggled heroically to repress his inclination to laugh aloud, and directed his steps toward the spot where he had left his servant, well content with his début. Trespolo, after emptying a bottle of *lachryma*, which he had the forethought to take along, had spent some time in selecting a spot where the grass was particularly high and thick, after which he fell sound asleep, muttering the sublime phrase:

"O sloth, but for Adam's fall thou wouldst be a virtue!"

The girl was unable to close her eyes during the night succeeding her interview with the stranger. His startlingly sudden appearance, his extraordinary costume, his strange language, had aroused a vague, ill-defined sentiment, which lay sleeping at the bottom of her heart. She was at this time in the perfect flower of her youth and her glorious beauty. Nisida's was not of those timid, shrinking natures which can be crushed by suffering, or cowed by despotism. On the other hand, her whole surroundings had contributed to make her life calm and peaceful; her affectionate, guileless soul had developed in an atmosphere of serenity and happiness. If her heart had remained untouched hitherto, it was not because her nature was cold and unresponsive, but because of the excessive bashfulness of the youth of the island. The profound and blind respect with which the old fisherman was regarded had drawn around his daughter a circle of esteem and humility which no one dared overstep. By dint of rigid economy and hard work, Solomon had succeeded in accumulating a competence which put to the blush the poverty of the other fishermen. No one had asked Nisida's hand, because no one dared to think that he deserved it. The only one of her adorers who had ventured to manifest his passion openly

was Bastiano, Gabriel's dearest friend; but Bastiano was little to her liking. Thus, trusting in her beauty, and sustained by a mysterious hope which never abandons youth, she had resigned herself to wait, like a king's daughter, anticipating the arrival of her destined lover from a foreign land.

On Assumption Day she had left the island for the first time in her life, being selected by lot from the maidens of the kingdom, whose mothers had dedicated them to the special protection of the Virgin. But she was overwhelmed by the burden of so novel a rôle, and the admiring looks of the vast crowd embarrassed and confused her so that she hardly dared raise her wondering eyes, and the splendor of the city passed before her like a vision of which she retained only an indistinct memory.

When she found herself face to face with this handsome youth of graceful, slender figure, and noble and distinguished bearing in striking contrast to the awkward bashfulness of her other lovers, she felt strangely moved, and doubtless would have believed, that her prince had arrived, if she had not been unpleasantly impressed by his wretched apparel. However she allowed herself to listen to him longer than she was called upon to do, and finally withdrew with her cheeks on fire and a dull pain at her heart. The poor girl would have died of fright, had she known the truth.

"If my father is unwilling that I should marry him," she said to herself, with the first touch of remorse she had ever known, "I have done wrong to speak to him. But he is so handsome!"

Thereupon she threw herself on her knees before the statue of the Virgin (who was her only confidante, for the poor child had never known her mother) and tried

to describe the perplexities of her heart; but she could not get to the end of her prayer. Her ideas became confused, and she surprised herself uttering strange words. Of a surety the Virgin took pity upon her lovely protégée, for she rose consoled, and with a determination to confide everything to her father.

"I can not doubt for a moment my father's affection," she mused, as she undressed. "If he forbids my speaking to him, it will be for my good. After all, I never saw him before," she added, throwing herself upon her bed, "and now that I think of it, it seems to me that he was very forward to dare to speak to me. I am almost inclined to laugh at him. How confidently he spouted his absurd speeches, and what a ridiculous way he had of rolling his eyes! His eyes are very handsome, though, and his mouth, and his forehead, and his hair! He doesn't suspect that I noticed how white his hands are, while he was waving them in the air, as he strode up and down the beach. Upon my word, he is keeping me awake! Why is it that his face is so stamped upon my mind? I don't want to see him again!" she cried, pulling the sheet over her head like a child in a pet. Then she began to laugh silently at her adorer's costume, and to wonder what her companions would say to him. Suddenly a horrible thought brought the wrinkles to her brow, and she shuddered from head to foot:—"Suppose he should find somewhere another prettier than I! Men are such fools! Really, it's too warm, I can't sleep to-night!"

Thereupon she sat up in bed and continued her soliloquy until morning, but we will not impose more of it upon our readers. As soon as the first ray of dawn came peeping into her room through the tangled branches of the jasmine, she dressed in haste, and went as usual to

her father for his morning kiss. The old man at once noticed the weary, depressed look that sleeplessness had left upon his daughter's face, and said, as he put aside with affectionate concern the lovely black locks that covered her cheeks:

"What is it, daughter? Didn't you sleep well?"

"I didn't sleep at all," Nisida replied, smiling to reassure him; "I am perfectly well, but I have a confession to make."

"Make it quickly, my dear; I am dying with impatience."

"Perhaps I did wrong; but you must promise me beforehand not to scold."

"You know very well that I spoil you with indulgence," said the old man, kissing her; "I won't begin to-day to be severe."

"A young man who doesn't belong on the island, and whose name I don't know, spoke to me last night as I was standing at my window to get a breath of air."

"What had he of such importance to say to you, Nisida, dear?"

"He begged me to speak to you in his behalf."

"Well, I am listening. What can I do for him?"

"Order me to marry him."

"And if I should, would you willingly obey me?"

"I think so, father," said the maiden frankly. "However, you must yourself in your wisdom judge for me; for I determined to speak to you before seeking to know him, and not to prolong an interview which you might not approve. But there is an obstacle."

"You know that I admit no obstacles when my daughter's happiness is at stake."

"He is poor, father."

"Well, that's an additional reason why I should like

him. There is work enough here for everybody, and I can make room at my table for a third son. He is young and has a pair of arms; he has a trade, no doubt?"

"He is a poet."

"Never mind; tell him to come and speak to me, and if he's a worthy fellow, I promise you, my daughter, that I will do all I can to advance your happiness."

Nisida kissed her father effusively and could not contain herself for joy all day, impatiently awaiting the evening and the opportunity to impart the glad news to the young stranger. Eligi de Brancaleone was but moderately flattered, as may be imagined, by the fisherman's magnanimity in his regard; but like the accomplished seducer that he was, he affected the keenest satisfaction. Mindful of his rôle of fanatical student and poet out at elbows he fell upon his knees and declaimed a fervent thanksgiving to Venus. He then said to Nisida in calmer tones, that he would write at once to his own father, who would come within the week to make a formal request for her hand. Until then he asked as a favor that she would not introduce him to Solomon or to any one else on the island, pretending that he was ashamed of his ragged clothes, and assuring his betrothed that his father would bring him a complete outfit for his wedding.

While the poor child was thus walking on the brink of the abyss in ominous security, Trespolo, in conformity with his master's orders, had taken up his quarters on the island in the guise of a pilgrim from Jerusalem. Playing the part to perfection, and interlarding his speech with biblical phrases (he claimed to have been formerly a sacristan) he distributed amulets by the score, of the wood of the true Cross, and of the milk of the Blessed Virgin, and all the treasures that never fail day

after day to nourish the ardent faith of godly folk. The authenticity of his relics was the less doubtful because he seldom sold them, and in his devout determination to remain poor, thanked the faithful who offered alms, but refused to accept them. Out of respect, however, for Solomon's well-approved virtue, he consented to break bread with him, and took his meals at the fisherman's house with the regularity of a cenobite. His abstinence caused everybody to wonder; a crust dipped in water, with a few nuts or figs, sufficed to keep the holy man alive, that is to say, to prevent him from dying. He entertained Nisida with descriptions of his travels and with mysterious predictions. Unfortunately he never appeared until toward evening; for he passed the rest of the day in self-castigation and in prayer; that is to say, in secretly compensating himself for the frugality he was obliged to exhibit in public, in getting tipsy as a Turk, and snoring like a buffalo bull.

On the morning of the seventh day succeeding the prince's promise to Nisida, he entered his servant's chamber, shook him violently, and shouted in his ear:

"Wake up, you beastly sot!"

Trespolo awakened with a start, rubbed his eyes in terror. The dead, lying peaceably in their graves, will not be so startled on the judgment day when the trumpet shall sound to rouse them from their slumber. Fear, however, at once dissipated the thick mist which veiled his eyes, and he sat up in bed, asking with a bewildered air:

"What's the matter, your Excellency?"

"The matter is that I will have you burned alive if you don't give up this infernal habit of sleeping twenty hours a day."

"I was not asleep, my prince," coolly rejoined the servant, leaping out of bed; "I was meditating."

"Hark you," said the prince sternly. "I believe you were once employed in a pharmacy?"

"Yes, Monsignore, and I left it because my master had the barbarity to make me pound drugs which tired my arms terribly."

"Here's a phial that contains a solution of opium."

"Mercy!" cried Trespolo, falling on his knees.

"Get up, you idiot, and attend to what I say. This little fool of a Nisida insists that I must speak to her father. I made her believe that I was going away this evening to get my papers. There is no time to lose. You are well known to the fisherman. You must pour this liquid into their wine, and your life will pay the forfeit if you go beyond the dose sufficient to produce a heavy sleep. You will be sure and have a stout ladder in readiness for my use this evening, and then you will go and await my coming in my boat where you will find Numa and Bonarosso. Those are my orders. I shall not need your help in the attack; I have my Campo-Basso dagger."

"But, Monsignore," stammered the panic-stricken Trespolo.

"No 'buts!'" cried the prince, with an angry stamp of his foot, "or by my father's death, I will cure you of your scruples once for all."

And he turned upon his heel with the air of one convinced that his orders would be diligently executed.

The unfortunate Trespolo followed his master's injunctions to the letter. In his mind, fear outweighed every other consideration. The evening meal at the fisherman's cottage that day was a very melancholy occasion, and the pretended pilgrim tried in vain to enliven it by his factitious gayety. Nisida was preoccupied over her lover's departure, and Solomon who unconsciously shared his

daughter's disappointment, was with difficulty prevailed upon by his guest's persistent urging to swallow a few drops of wine. Gabriel had started that morning for Sorrento, in company with Bastiano, and was not to return for two or three days, and his absence added to the old man's depression. As soon as Trespolo took his leave, Solomon gave way to his fatigue. Nisida, her arms hanging listlessly at her sides, with a feeling of intense heaviness in her head, and a vague presentiment of evil weighing upon her heart, was hardly able to drag herself upstairs to her chamber; she mechanically replenished the lamp, then, fell upon her bed, as pale and stiff as if she were dead.

Suddenly a fierce storm broke over the island; one of those storms which are seen only in the South, when the banked up clouds open and pour down torrents of rain and hail, until it seems as if the Deluge had come again. The rumbling of the thunder came nearer and nearer, until it resembled a sharp cannonade. The bay, a moment before so calm and smooth, that the island was reflected in its depths as in a mirror, suddenly grew dark, and the angry waves dashed madly against the shore. The island fairly trembled under the terrific blows.

The most daring fishermen had drawn their boats up high and dry, and were safely housed, doing their best to calm the terror of their wives and children.

Amid the dense darkness which prevailed upon the sea, Nisida's lamp, burning before the Virgin's shrine, shone forth bright and clear.

Two boats without sail or oars, or rudder, driven hither and thither by the spiteful gusts of wind, were tossing aimlessly about on the surface of the raging flood; in each boat stood a man, with bare chest and streaming hair and rigid muscles. They held each other by the

hand to keep their boats together, gazing fearlessly upon the sea, and defying the tempest.

"Once more I beg you, Gabriel, let me go," cried one; "I promise you that with my broken oars and a little perseverance I can work my way to La Torre before daybreak."

"You are mad, Bastiano; ever since morning we have been trying in vain to get into Vico and have had to lie off and on all day; your strength and skill are powerless against this fearful gale, which has driven us back here."

"It's the first time that you ever refused to go with me," observed the other.

"Yes, I know it, my dear Bastiano; but somehow or other to-night I felt as if I were drawn back to the island by an irresistible force. The wind worked itself into a passion to bring me back in spite of myself, and I confess, even if it makes you think me a fool, that I feel as if there was an order from on high in this very simple every day occurrence. Do you see that light yonder?"

"I recognize it," replied Bastiano, stifling a sigh.

"It was lighted in front of the Virgin's shrine the day my sister was born, and for eighteen years has never once ceased to burn, night and day. Such was my mother's wish. You do not know, my dear Bastiano, you cannot know the heart-rending thoughts brought to my mind by this mention of my mother's wish. My poor mother sent for me on her death-bed, and told me a fearful tale, a horrible mystery that weighs upon my heart like a leaden pall, and I can not obtain relief from it by confiding it to my friend. When she had told it to me to the end, she asked to see my sister, who was just born; she kissed her, and insisted upon lighting the lamp herself with her trembling hand, already cold in death.

"'Remember, Gabriel,'—these were her last words,—'remember that your sister is dedicated to the Madonna. So long as this light burns before the blessed image of the Virgin, your sister will be in no danger.'

"You can understand now, why, when we are crossing the bay at night, I always have my eyes fixed on that lamp. I have a firm belief, which nothing can weaken, that on the day when that lamp goes out, my sister's soul will have flown upward to heaven."

"Very well!" rejoined Bastiano, in a gruff tone which betrayed his emotion; "if you prefer to stay behind, I will go alone."

"*Addio*," said Gabriel, releasing his companion's hand, without taking his eyes from the window, to which they were drawn by a fascination he could not explain. Bastiano disappeared, and Nisida's brother, driven on by wind and wave, was drawing nearer and nearer the shore, when, suddenly, he uttered a terrible cry which rang out above the roar of the tempest.

The star had disappeared; the lamp had gone out.

"My sister is dead!" cried Gabriel, and throwing himself into the sea, he swam toward the island with the rapidity of lightning.

The storm was raging with redoubled violence; the lightning tore the clouds asunder with long, zigzag flashes, and shed an intermittent flood of vivid light on objects near at hand and distant. The youth spied a ladder standing against the front wall of the house, seized it convulsively, and with three leaps was in his sister's chamber.

The prince was conscious of a strange emotion on entering that pure, silent bower. The calm, sweet glance of the Virgin, who seemed to be watching over the sleeping maiden—the perfume of innocence which was

diffused about her virginal bed, the lamp shining amid the darkness like a soul at prayer, affected the seducer in a way to which he was a stranger. Vexed at what he considered an absurd weakness, he blew out the lamp, and was walking toward the bed, rebuking himself in thought, when Gabriel pounced upon him with the fierce roar of a wounded tiger.

Brancaleone with a swift movement, which showed him to be possessed of no common courage and address, succeeded in drawing a long dagger with a slender barbed blade, as he struggled in his adversary's close embrace. Gabriel smiled disdainfully, snatched the weapon from his hand, and as he stooped to break it across his knee, struck the prince a violent blow with his head, which overturned him, and sent him rolling along the floor. Then he leaned over his poor sister, and gazed eagerly into her face by the fleeting light of a lightning-flash.

"Dead!" he exclaimed, wringing his hands in despair, "dead!"

In the awful paroxysm which compressed his throat, he could find no other words with which to satisfy his rage, or give voice to his grief. His hair, which the rain had glued to his cheeks, stood erect upon his head, he was chilled to the very marrow, and could feel the tears falling upon his heart. It was a terrible moment; he forgot that the assassin was still living.

Meanwhile the prince, whose wonderful self-possession did not abandon him for a second, had risen to his feet, bruised and bleeding. Pale and trembling with rage, he was looking about on all sides for a weapon with which to avenge himself. Gabriel came toward him, frowning more blackly and more threateningly than

ever, and seizing his neck in a grasp of iron, dragged him into the room where his father lay asleep.

"Father! father! father!" he cried in a heartrending voice, "this is the cowardly villain who has murdered Nisida."

The old man who had swallowed only a few drops of the opiate, awoke at the cry, which echoed in his heart. He rose as if propelled by a spring, threw off the clothes, and with the swiftness of movement which God makes possible to mothers when their offspring is in danger, hastened to his daughter's chamber, struck a light, knelt on the edge of the bed, and began to feel her pulse, and watch for signs of respiration in mortal anxiety.

All this took place in less time than we have occupied in the telling. Brancaleone, by an incredible exertion of strength, extricated himself from the younger man's hands, and assuming his princeliest demeanor, said with emphasis:

"Surely you will not kill me without hearing me."

Gabriel tried to overwhelm him with deadly insults, but as he could not utter a single word, he burst into tears.

"Your sister is not dead," said the prince with cold dignity, "she is only sleeping. You can go and satisfy yourself upon that point, and I pledge my word that I will not stir a step until you return."

These words were uttered with such an accent of sincerity that the fisherman was impressed. A ray of unexpected hope suddenly lighted up his features; he cast a glance of hatred and distrust upon the stranger, and muttered in a hollow voice:

"Do not flatter yourself, pray, that you can escape me."

Then he went up to his sister's room, and said tremblingly:

"Well, father?"

Solomon gently pushed him back with the solicitude of a mother waving a buzzing insect away from her child's cradle, and whispered, putting his finger to his lips:

"She is neither dead nor poisoned. Some potion or other has been given her for an evil purpose. Her respiration is regular, and she must come out of her lethargy very soon."

Thus reassured concerning Nisida, Gabriel silently returned to the lower room, where he had left the seducer. His expression was grave and threatening; his purpose no longer was to tear his sister's murderer to pieces with his nails, but to solve a mystery of treachery and turpitude, and to avenge her honor, which had been basely assailed. He threw open the door through which the light entered the room where he was accustomed to sleep with his father on the rare occasions when he passed the night at home. The rain had ceased, and a moonbeam breaking through the clouds, suddenly made its way into the room. The fisherman readjusted his drenched garments, shook his head, and walked toward the stranger, who awaited him without flinching.

"Now," said he, looking him proudly in the eye, "you will be good enough to explain your presence in our house."

"I admit," said the prince, flippantly, and with the most insolent nonchalance, "that appearances are against me. It is the destiny of lovers to be treated as housebreakers. But, although I have not the honor of being known to you I am affianced to the fair Nisida, with your father's consent, of course. Now, as I am unfortunate enough to have very stern parents, they have had the hard-heartedness to withhold their consent. My passion led me astray, and I was about to commit an

error, upon which young people like yourself ought to look with indulgence. At the worst it was naught but a simple attempt at abduction, with the most honorable intentions, I give you my word, and I am ready to make everything right if you choose to give me your hand and call me your brother."

"I choose to call you traitor and coward," retorted Gabriel, whose cheeks were aflame with wrath to hear his sister spoken of with such impudent levity. "It may be that insults are avenged thus in cities, but we fishermen have a different system. Ah! you flattered yourself that you could bring desolation and shame into our family by paying assassins to come and share an old man's bread and poison his daughter, that you could sneak into my sister's chamber at night, armed with a dagger like a brigand, and then be quit of it all by marrying the loveliest woman in the kingdom!"

The prince made a movement.

"Hark ye," continued Gabriel, "I might crush you just as I broke your dagger just now; but I have pity on you. I see that you do not know how to do anything with your hands, either defend yourself or work. Ah! I begin to understand it all; you stole your poverty, my master, and boasted of it; you dressed yourself in these old clothes, but you're not worthy to wear them."

He cast a crushing glance of contempt upon the prince, then went to a closet hidden in the wall and took therefrom a gun and an axe.

"These are all the weapons there are in the house," he said; "take your choice."

A joyful light shone in the eyes of the prince, who had thus far swallowed his wrath; he eagerly seized the gun, fell back two or three steps, and said, with all the haughtiness he could command:

"You would have done better to loan me this weapon at first; for in that case you would have spared me the weariness of listening to your absurd speeches and looking at your frenzied contortions. Thanks, young man; one of my servants will bring back your gun. *Addio;* this for your trouble."

As he spoke, he threw him his purse, which fell heavily to the floor at the fisherman's feet.

"I loaned you that gun to fight with me," cried Gabriel, motionless with astonishment.

"Stand aside, boy, you are mad," said the prince, taking a step toward the door.

"So you refuse to defend yourself," demanded Gabriel in a determined tone.

"I have already told you that I cannot fight you."

"Why not?"

"Because God has so willed; because you were born to crawl, and I to trample you under my feet; because all the blood that I might shed in this island would not pay for a single drop of my own blood; because the lives of a thousand wretches like yourself are not worth a single hour of my life; because you will bend the knee at my name, when I pronounce it; because, in short, you are naught but a poor, miserable, fisherman, and I the Prince of Brancaleone."

At that awe-inspiring name, which the young nobleman threw at his head as if to strike him dumb, the fisherman leaped into the air like a lion. He breathed freely as if a heavy weight that had long oppressed his heart had been lifted away.

"Ah!" he cried, "you have put yourself in my hands, Monsignore. Between the poor fisherman and the powerful noble there is a debt of blood. You must pay for your father and yourself. We will adjust our

accounts, your Excellency," he added, waving his axe above the prince's head, who at once levelled his gun at him. "Oh! you made your choice too hastily; the gun isn't loaded."

The prince turned pale.

"Between our families," continued Gabriel, "there exists an awful mystery which my mother imparted to me on the brink of the grave, but of which my father knows nothing, and which no one on earth ought to hear. But in your case, it's different, for you are soon to die."

He dragged him out into the yard.

"Do you know why my sister, whom you sought to dishonor, was dedicated to the Madonna? Because your father before you sought to dishonor my mother. There is a taint of infamy on your accursed family. You do not know the terrible, slow torture my mother suffered, which ruined her health, and brought her to the grave long before her time, and which that angelic soul never dared to mention, save to her son at the very last, and then only to urge him to watch over his sister."

He wiped away a burning tear.

"One day, before we were born, a beautiful lady, richly dressed, landed on the island from a beautiful boat; she asked to see my mother, who was as young and fair as my Nisida is to-day. She was tireless in her praise, and blamed blind destiny for burying such a lovely gem in this obscure island; she overwhelmed my mother with caresses and gifts, and ended by asking leave of her parents to take her for her companion. The poor people, anticipating a brilliant future for their daughter, under the patronage of such a great lady, were weak enough to give their consent. This lady was your mother; and do you know why she sought out that poor, innocent girl? Because your mother had a lover, and

chose this infamous means of assuring herself of her husband's indulgence.

"Be silent, villain!"

"Oh! you will listen to me to the end, your Excellency. At first my mother was treated with the greatest consideration and attention; the princess could not bear to be parted from her for an instant; the most complimentary words, the richest clothes, the finest jewels were all for her, and the servants were as respectful to her as if she had been their master's daughter. When her parents went to see her and asked if she never regretted having left them, they found her always so beautiful and happy, that they blessed the princess as a beneficent angel sent to them from God. The prince thereupon conceived an extraordinary liking for my mother, and his manner gradually became more familiar and caressing. At last the princess went away for several days, regretting that she could not take with her her dear child, as she called her. The prince's brutality thereupon passed all bounds, and he no longer took pains to conceal his vile purpose. He spread out pearl necklaces and whole caskets of diamonds before the poor girl; he passed from burning passion to brutal anger, from the most humble entreaties to the most terrible threats. The poor child was imprisoned in a dungeon to which scarcely a ray of light could penetrate, and every morning a surly jailer threw in to her a bit of black bread, always repeating with an oath that it lay with herself to change her situation by becoming the prince's mistress. This outrage lasted two years. The princess had gone for a long journey in foreign parts, and my poor mother's parents supposed that their daughter was still living happily with her patroness. On her return, having doubtless fresh sins of her own to be forgiven, she rebuked the prince for his

lack of cleverness, released my mother from her dungeon, pretended to be indignant beyond measure at her horrible treatment, which she claimed to have known nothing about, dried her tears, and with the basest refinement of perfidy received the thanks of the victim she was about to sacrifice.

"One evening—I have nearly done, Monsignore,—the princess chose to sup alone with her companion; the most exquisite dishes, the rarest fruits, the most delicious wines were placed before my poor mother, whose long-continued sufferings had undermined her health, and affected her mind. A diabolical potion was mixed with her wine; that is another weakness of your family. My mother's head grew dizzy, her eyes shone with a feverish brilliancy, her cheeks were on fire. Thereupon the prince came in—oh! you will see, your Excellency, that God protects the unprotected. My mother fled for shelter like a frightened dove to the princess' embrace, and she repulsed her with a mocking laugh. The poor, trembling, weeping girl, in her despair knelt in the middle of that infamous room. It was St. Anne's day; suddenly the house was shaken to its foundation, the walls fell in, and cries of distress arose in the street. My mother was saved. It was the earthquake that destroyed half of Naples. You know of it, Monsignore, because your former palace was made uninhabitable."

"What is your object in telling me this?" cried Brancaleone in a frenzy of excitement.

"Oh! I simply wish to convince you that you must fight with me," replied the fisherman coolly, handing him powder and ball; "and now," he added, solemnly, "say your prayers, Monsignore, for I warn you that you will die by my hand; justice must be done!"

The prince carefully scrutinized the powder and ball, made sure that the gun was in proper condition, loaded it, and being in haste to make an end of the affair, took aim at his foe; but whether because he was unnerved by the agitation he had experienced during the terrible narrative, or because the grass was wet and slippery after the rain, as he put his left foot forward to ensure his aim, he slipped, lost his balance and fell upon one knee. The bullet flew wide of its mark.

"That doesn't count, Monsignore," cried Gabriel, handing him a second charge.

The report brought Solomon to the window; he at once realized what was going forward, and raised his arms in mute but fervent prayer to God. Eligi uttered a horrible oath, and hastily reloaded his weapon; but he was so impressed by the assured air of the young man standing motionless before him, and of his calm and impassive father, who seemed to be imploring God, in the name of his paternal authority, to pronounce in favor of the innocent, and was furthermore so disconcerted by his fall, that as he stood with trembling knees and nerveless arms he felt the chill of death in his veins. However, he made a mighty effort to subdue his emotion, and took aim a second time; the ball grazed the fisherman's ear, and buried itself in the trunk of a poplar.

The prince, with the energy of despair, seized the gun by the barrel with both hands, but Gabriel stepped towards him with uplifted axe, terrible to look upon, and at the first blow severed the barrel from the butt. He was still hesitating at the thought of killing a defenceless man, when two armed retainers appeared at the end of the road. Gabriel did not notice them, but just

as they were about to seize him by the shoulders, Solomon shouted to him, and ran down to his assistance.

"Help, Numa! help, Bonarosso! kill the brigands! they mean to murder me!" cried the prince.

"Ah! you lied to me, Prince of Brancaleone," cried Gabriel, and he drove his axe into his brain.

The two bravoes, who were coming to their master's assistance, fled when they saw him fall. Solomon and his son went up to Nisida's chamber. The maiden was just rousing from her heavy sleep; the perspiration stood in shining drops upon her forehead and she slowly opened her eyes as the day was breaking.

"Why do you look at me so, father?" she said, still not quite herself, passing her hand across her forehead.

The old man kissed her tenderly.

"You have escaped a great danger, my dear Nisida," he said; "rise, and let us offer thanks to the Madonna."

All three prostrated themselves before the blessed image of the Virgin, and began to repeat the litanies.

But at that instant the clash of weapons was heard in the yard, the house was surrounded by soldiers, and a lieutenant of police seized Gabriel, exclaiming in a loud voice:

"I arrest you in the name of the law for the murder of his most illustrious Excellency, the Prince of Brancaleone."

Nisida, struck dumb by these words, remained where she knelt, as pale and rigid as one of the marble statues so frequently carved upon tombs. Gabriel was preparing to make an insane resistance, when a warning gesture from his father checked him.

"Signor Teneute," said Solomon to the officer, "my son killed the prince in lawful defence of his home, for he had entered the house by means of a ladder, in the

night time, and armed. The proofs are before you. There is the ladder standing against the wall, and here," he added, picking up the two pieces of the broken blade, "is a dagger with the Brancaleone arms. However, we do not refuse to go with you."

The fisherman's last words were drowned by shouts from all sides of, "down with the sbirri! down with the police!" The entire island was up in arms, and the sturdy fishermen would have allowed themselves to be cut to pieces to the last man rather than allow a hand to be laid upon Solomon or any of his children.

But the old man appeared upon his threshold, and said, with a calm and solemn gesture which allayed the wrath of the people:

"Thank you, my children, but the law must be obeyed. I shall find strength to uphold my son's innocence before his judges with my single voice."

Little more than three months has passed since the day when we first saw the aged fisherman of Nisida before the door of his house, reflecting the beams of the happiness he had himself done so much to create among his neighbors, enthroned like a king upon his stone bench, and blessing his two children, the fairest to be found upon the island. Now the whole existence of the once happy and envied man is changed. The laughing cottage which leaned out over the bay like a swan upon the brink of a transparent pool, is desolate and sad; the little yard, hedged round with lilac and with hawthorn, where joyous groups of young and old used to sit about at close of day, is silent and deserted. No human voice dares to intrude upon the grief of that heart-breaking solitude. But, as evening falls, the sad sea waves, in pity for such bitter woe, murmur plaintively upon the beach.

Gabriel has been sentenced to die. The report of the death of the noble Prince of Brancaleone, young and handsome and universally adored, not only stirred the Neapolitan aristocracy to its lowest depths, but aroused the indignation of all classes. He was bewept by everyone, and there was a unanimous demand for speedy vengeance on his murderer. The judicial investigation was begun with startling promptitude.

However, the magistrates, whose duty required them to sit in judgment upon this deplorable affair, manifested irreproachable uprightness and impartiality. No consideration outside the strict line of their duty, no desire to please a noble and powerful family, could make them disregard their conscientious convictions. History has recorded this memorable trial, and has no reproach for the men concerned, which does not apply with much greater force to the imperfect laws of mankind. Appearances, which the genius of evil on earth so often makes use of to conceal the truth, overwhelmed the poor fisherman with convincing proofs of his guilt.

Trespolo, from whose heart fear had banished all scruple, and who, as being the prince's confidential servant, was first questioned, declared with unblushing audacity that his master desired to get out of reach for two or three days of the importunities of a young lady of whom he was beginning to grow weary, and so betook himself to the island of Nisida with three or four of his most devoted retainers, and that he, Trespolo, had assumed the disguise of a pilgrim of his own motion, as he did not wish to betray his Excellency's *incognito* to the fishermen, who would have been sure to annoy so lofty a personage beyond measure with their petitions. Two soldiers, who happened to be upon the hillside at the moment the crime was committed, gave testimony

tending to corroborate the valet's long deposition; hidden by a thicket, they saw Gabriel rush upon the prince, and distinctly heard the dead man's last words, that he was being murdered. All the witnesses, even those who were summoned at the request of the accused, made his position worse by their testimony, which they strove to render favorable to him. And so the investigation, with customary perspicacity and unerring certainty, established the fact that Eligi di Brancaleone, being temporarily out of conceit with life in the city, had taken refuge on the island of Nisida with the intention of devoting himself to the harmless recreation of fishing, which had always been his favorite sport (affidavits were annexed to the report, going to show that the prince had attended regularly every second year at the great haul of tunny-fish on his domain at Palermo): that soon after he reached the island, Gabriel, who accompanied his sister to the city for the procession a few days earlier, and doubtless then conceived the idea of murdering him,—Gabriel saw and recognized him. On the day preceding the crime Gabriel's absence was noticed, as well as the excited condition of his father and sister.

Towards evening the prince dismissed his servant, and went out alone, as usual, to stroll along the shore. Surprised by the storm, and being unfamiliar with the nooks and corners of the island, he was wandering around the fisherman's house in search of shelter. Thereupon Gabriel, emboldened by the darkness and the howling of the storm, which would drown the cries of his victim, determined, after long hesitation, to commit the crime, and having fired twice at the unfortunate youth without hitting him, finished him with an axe; lastly, that the prince's retainers appeared just as Gabriel, with Solomon's assistance, was about to throw the body into the

sea, whereupon they went up to Nisida's room, and having concocted their absurd fable, knelt in front of the Virgin to throw dust in the eyes of the officers. All the circumstances appealed to by Solomon in his son's favor, were turned against him; the ladder placed against the wall belonged to the fisherman; the dagger, which young Brancaleone always wore for defensive purposes, had evidently been taken away after his death, and Gabriel had hastened to break it in order to destroy the traces of his crime so far as he was able to do so. They did not give a second's consideration to the testimony of Sebastiano, who, in order to negative premeditation, swore that the accused did not part from him until after the storm burst upon the island; in the first place he was known to be Gabriel's most devoted friend, and his sister's most persistent suitor, and in the second place he was seen to land at La Torre at the very time that he claimed to have been in the neighborhood of Nisida. As for the prince's passion for the poor peasant, the magistrates shrugged their shoulders at such ridiculous idea, and especially at the resistance attributed to the girl, and the extreme measures to which the prince was said to have been compelled to resort to triumph over Nisida's virtue. Eligi di Brancaleone was to young and handsome and fascinating, and at the same time so undemonstrative in his successes, that he had never been suspected of using violence except to rid himself of his mistresses. Lastly, an absolutely conclusive and unanswerable piece of testimony overturned all the arguments of the defence; they found beneath the fisherman's bed a purse, stamped with the Brancaleone arms and filled with gold; the prince, as our readers have not forgotten, threw it as a crowning insult, at Gabriel's feet.

The old man's courage did not falter in face of this

scaffolding of falsehood; after the arguments of the advocates whose ruinous eloquence he had purchased at its weight in gold, he spoke himself in his son's behalf, and made such a sincere and impassioned and tearful appeal, that the whole audience was deeply moved, and three of the judges voted for acquittal: but the majority was adverse, and the fatal sentence was pronounced.

The result was soon known in the little island, and caused profound discouragement there. The fishermen, who rose in a body to defend their comrade at the beginning, now bowed their heads without a murmur before the irrevocable decree.

Solomon received without flinching the dagger-thrust which pierced his heart. Not a sigh escaped from his breast, not a tear came to his eye; his wound did not bleed. On the day of his son's arrest he sold all that he possessed in the world, even to the little silver cross which his wife bequeathed him on her death-bed, and the pearl necklace which gratified his paternal pride by losing its whiteness against his dear Nisida's neck. He sewed the gold pieces which the sale of his goods brought him into the lining of his coarse woolen cap, and took up his quarters in the capital. He ate nothing but bits of bread which compassionate passers-by tossed to him, and slept on church-steps or in the magistrates' doorways.

To appreciate at its true value the heroic courage of this unhappy father, we must take in at a single glance the whole extent of his misfortunes. The death of his child was by no means the only pang which tore his martyr's heart. Overborne by years and by grief, he looked forward with solemn tranquillity to the terrible moment when his son should go down a few days before him to the grave. His most poignant suffering was caused

by the thought of the shame that would rest upon his family. The first scaffold to be erected in that island, the home of gentle manners, of unbending virtue and of honorable poverty, was to be erected for Gabriel, and the ignominious punishment would brand the whole population, and leave upon its brow the first stamp of infamy. By a painful transition, which is readily made in the lives of us poor mortals, the poor father sighed for those moments of danger which once made him tremble, moments when his son might have died a noble death. And now all was lost; his long life of hard labor, self-abnegation and good works; his pure and stainless reputation which extended beyond the bay into distant countries, the admiration, almost amounting to religious veneration, of several successive generations; all this had served only to dig deeper the abyss into which the fisherman had fallen at a single blow from his proud eminence. His prestige, that divine halo, without which nothing is sacred here below, had disappeared. No one dared defend the wretched man; they pitied him. His name would soon be pronounced with horror, and Nisida, poor child, would be in everybody's eyes naught but the sister of a condemned man. Even Bastiano tearfully turned his head away. And so, when all means of delay were exhausted, when all Solomon's attempts had failed, it was commonly said in the city, by those who saw him smile a strange smile as if possessed by a fixed idea, that the old man had lost his reason.

Gabriel saw the sun rise upon his last day with serene tranquillity. He had slept soundly, and awoke filled with a strange feeling of happiness; a joyous sunbeam streamed through the little window and shone upon the fine, golden-hued straw in his dungeon; an autumn breeze played about his face, caressing his brow with a

pleasant coolness, and running through his long, silky locks. The jailer, who treated him kindly all the time he was in his custody, was impressed with his joyous appearance, and hesitated a moment before announcing the presence of the priest, disliking to disturb the poor fellow's dreaming. Gabriel welcomed the priest joyfully; he talked with him two hours and wept softly when he received absolution. The priest went forth from the prison, weeping freely, and proclaiming aloud that he had never in his life met a purer and more lovely nature, or a soul more filled with courage and resignation.

The fisherman was still absorbed in his comforting emotion when his sister entered. Since the day that she had been taken away in a swoon from the room where her brother was arrested, the poor girl, who had taken refuge with an aunt, had done nothing but blame herself as the cause of all the evil that had come to pass and weep at the feet of her saintly patroness. Bent beneath her sorrow, like a lily bent by the tempest, she passed long hours sitting perfectly still, with pallid cheeks and her thoughts far away from earth, while the tears fell silently upon her lovely clasped hands. When the moment came for her to go and embrace her brother for the last time, Nisida rose with the courage of a saint. She washed away the marks of tears, smoothed her beautiful black hair and donned her loveliest white dress; the unhappy child tried to hide her grief by a stratagem to which an angel might have resorted. She had the strength to smile!

At sight of her terrifying pallor, Gabriel's heart failed him, and a cloud passed over his eyes. He tried to run to meet her, but, being held back by the chain which fastened him to the wall, he recoiled suddenly and staggered. Nisida darted to his side and caught him in her

arms. The girl understood his emotion, and assured him as to her health. Dreading to remind him of his terrible situation she talked volubly of a thousand things—her aunt, the lovely weather and the Madonna. Suddenly she paused, terrified by her own words and by his silence; she fastened a burning glance upon her brother's face as if to fascinate him. Gradually excitement brought the color to her emaciated cheeks, and Gabriel, deceived by her superhuman efforts, saw that she was still beautiful, and thanked God in his heart for having spared this one weak creature.

Nisida, as if she had divined his thoughts, pressed his hand understandingly, and whispered in his ear:

"Happily father has been away two days; he sent word to me that he had returned to the city. It is different with us; we are young, and brave!"

The poor child was trembling like a leaf.

"What will become of you—my poor Nisida?" cried Gabriel, with a sigh.

"Never fear for me; I will pray to the Madonna. Doesn't she protect us?"

She checked herself as she realized that their cruel plight gave the lie to her words. But she glanced at her brother, and continued earnestly:

"To be sure she protects us. She appeared to me in a dream last night. She held the child Jesus in her arms and gazed at me with motherly affection. She means to make us saints, for she loves us; and if we would be saints, Gabriel, we must suffer."

"Well, go now and pray for me, my dear sister; go where you cannot see this melancholy spot, which will eventually destroy your firmness, and perhaps mine as well. Go; we shall meet again in heaven, where our mother awaits us; our mother, whom you never knew,

but I will talk to her often about you. Farewell, dear sister, until we meet again."

He kissed her on the forehead. The girl summoned all her strength for this supreme moment; she walked with a firm step to the door, and when she reached it turned and waved a farewell with her hand, preventing an outbreak of grief by a superhuman effort; but once in the corridor, she sobbed bitterly, and Gabriel, overhearing her, thought that his heart would break. He threw himself upon his knees, and cried with uplifted hands:

"I have done with suffering; there is no other tie to make me cling to life. I thank Thee, O my God, for that Thou dost detain my father elsewhere, because Thou didst wish to spare the poor old man a bitter pang that would have tried him beyond his strength."

About noon Solomon, the fisherman, having exhausted every possible expedient, expended his last farthing, and embraced the knees of the last magistrate's valet, betook himself to the prison where his son was confined. His whole appearance was so dejected that the guards were moved to compassion, and the jailer wept as he closed the cell-door upon him.

The old man stood still for an instant, absorbed in contemplation of his son. His glittering eyes showed that some dark thought was uppermost at that moment in his mind. And yet he seemed impressed anew by Gabriel's beauty. Three months in prison had served to whiten the skin the sun had tanned; his fine, black hair fell in curls about his neck, and his eyes rested upon his father's face, glistening with unshed tears. Never had that fair head seemed fairer than just as it was on the point of falling.

"Alas! my poor boy," the old man began, "there is no hope; you must die."

"I know it," rejoined Gabriel in a tone of affectionate reproach, "but that is not what troubles me most at this moment. Pray, why do you, at your age, come to add to my grief? I hoped—Why did you not stay in the city?"

"People are pitiless in the city; I threw myself at the king's feet, at everybody's feet, but there is no pardon, no mercy for us."

"But what is death to me? I face it every day upon the sea. My greatest sorrow, my only sorrow, is for the sorrow that I bring upon you."

"And do you think, dear Gabriel, that I suffer simply because you are to die? Why it is but a parting for a day or two; I shall soon come and join you. Ah, no! I have a heavier burden than that to bear. I am strong, I am a man—"

He stopped, fearing that he had said too much; then went to where his son stood, and added in a tearful voice:

"Forgive me, Gabriel, for I am the cause of your death. I should have killed the prince with my own hand. Children and aged men are not condemned to death in our country. I am more than eighty years old, and I should have been pardoned; indeed they told me so when I implored your pardon with the tears streaming from my eyes. Once more, forgive me, Gabriel; I thought my daughter was dead, and had no thought for anything else; and then I did not know the law."

"Father, father!" exclaimed Gabriel with emotion, "what do you say? I would have given my life a thousand times to add one day to yours. Since you are

strong enough to be present at my death, you need have no fear; you will not see the color leave my cheeks; your son will die in a manner worthy of his father."

"And he must die! must die!" cried Solomon, beating his brow in despair, and darting piercing glances at the walls as if he would cut his way through them.

"I am resigned, dear father," said Gabriel gently; "did not Christ suffer on the Cross?"

"Yes," muttered the old man in a hollow voice, "but He left no sister behind him, dishonored by his death."

These words which escaped the fisherman in spite of himself, cast a sudden, ghastly ray of light into Gabriel's soul. For the first time he realized the infamy attaching to his death; the insolent mob crowding about the scaffold, the executioner's hideous hand seizing him by the hair, and drops of his blood falling upon his sister's spotless robe and staining it with shame.

"Oh! if I only had a weapon!" he cried, casting his haggard eyes on this side and that.

"The weapon is not wanting," replied Solomon, laying his hand upon the hilt of a dagger hidden in his breast.

"Pray then, kill me, father," said Gabriel, in a low voice, but with an irresistible accent of entreaty; "oh! I confess that the thought of the executioner's hand upon me makes me shudder with fear. Nisida, poor Nisida! I have seen her. She was here a moment since, as white and fair as the Madonna Dolorosa, and she smiled to hide her agony from me. She was happy, poor girl, because she believed that you were away. Oh! how sweet it would be to me to die by your hand! You gave

me life, and do you take it from me, father, since God so wills. Nisida will be saved. Oh! do not hesitate; it would be cowardly in both of us, for she is my sister and your daughter!"

Seeing that his fervent entreaties had almost persuaded the old man, he continued:

"Now, dear father, now!" And he bared his breast for the blow. Solomon raised his hand to strike, but he trembled convulsively in every limb. He threw himself into his son's arms; and they wept together.

"Poor father!" said Gabriel. "I should have foreseen this. Give me the dagger and turn your head away; I am young and my hand does not tremble."

"Oh! no," said Solomon solemnly, "no, my son, that would be suicide! I wish that thy soul should go hence to heaven without a stain! God will give me of His strength. Besides, we still have some time."

And a last ray of hope shone in the old man's eyes.

Thereupon ensued one of those scenes which words are powerless to describe. The wretched father sat upon the straw, beside his son, and gently placed his head upon his knee. He smiled upon him through his tears as if he were a sick child; he passed his hand slowly through his silky curls, and asked him scores of questions intermingled with caresses. To wean him from thoughts of this world he talked to him unceasingly of the world to come. Then suddenly he recurred to the past, and questioned him as to the most minute details of his life. Sometimes he paused with a thrill of terror and counted his heart-beats which marked the headlong flight of time.

"Tell me everything, my child," he said; "have you any wish or longing that can be gratified before your

death? Do you leave any woman behind whom you have loved in secret? All that we have left she shall share with us."

"I have no regret save for you and my sister. You are the only human beings I have ever loved since my mother's death."

"Be comforted then; for your sister will be saved."

"Oh! yes, I shall die happy."

"Do you forgive our enemies?"

"With my whole heart. I pray God to forgive the witnesses who swore falsely against me. May He also deign to forgive my sins!"

"How old are you?" the old man abruptly asked him; for his reason was beginning to give way, and he had lost his memory.

"I was twenty-five on All Saints' Day."

"True; it was a sad day this year; you were in prison."

"Do you remember five years ago to-day when I won the prize in the regatta at Venice?"

"Tell me about it, my boy."

He was listening with his hand in his son's, his head bent forward, and his mouth open, when footsteps came along the corridor, and there was a loud knock at the door. The fatal hour had arrived. The poor father had forgotten it.

The priests had already intoned the hymn of death, the executioner was ready, and the procession about to move, when Solomon, the fisherman, suddenly appeared in the doorway, with flaming eyes and his brow begirt with the halo of the patriarchs of old. He drew himself up to his full height, and held the bloody knife high in the air.

"The sacrifice is accomplished!" he exclaimed in a sublime tone; "God did not send His angel to stay the hand of Abraham."

The crowd carried him away in triumph.*

PIER ANGELO FIORENTINO.

* The details of the affair are recorded in the archives of the *Corte Criminale* at Naples. We have made no change in the age or rank of any of the characters in the narrative. One of the most famous advocates at the Neapolitan bar secured the old man's acquittal.